WIN! RENT OR MORTGAGE PAID FOR A YEAR*

APRIL 2025

Better Homes and Gardens®

FREE BUDGET COOKBOOK TO DOWNLOAD

See page 11

7 TV SHOW TURN US ON!

FRUGAL AND FABULOUS FOLIAGE

- *Grow an abundant harvest for free*
- *Propagate your own indoor jungle*

+ crochet your forever plants!

Easy eats for under $5

Our affordable, tasty meals will blow you away!

ROAST CHICKEN WITH BRAISED FENNEL AND CANNELLINI BEANS

SEE PAGE 31

Our best-ever value *ideas*

Clever solutions and loads of ways to save

- Charlie's low-cost outdoor oasis • DIY ink art with Juliet
- Thrift and thrive • Designer looks on a dime • Get crafty with velvet



HOP INTO EASTER!

Steph de Sousa's fun & simple choc recipes ▶

*SEE PAGE 167

PLUS Justine Schofield's top freezer budget tips!





Finding VALUE



From money-saving tips to clever ideas, may these pages enrich your home and garden journey.

This issue is all about finding richness in your home and garden. You'll notice we've jam-packed these pages with helpful and practical ideas to save money and grow your wealth.

Garden lovers can rejoice with our tips on regrowing fruit and vegies from scraps and seeds (p16) and propagating a garden for free (p64)!

Unleash the potential of your space while still being kind to your wallet. Discover our low-cost alternatives for expensive home features (p42) and craft classy touches in your home with velvet (p148). Step outside and make a courtyard space your new oasis with Charlie (p116), while keeping unwanted weeds and pests away with our DIY natural herbicides and pesticides (p160).

There's plenty of upcycling, such as our tips to reupholster a vintage chair (p52) or make a community cubby from a pre-loved cabinet (p82). And we couldn't leave thrifting on the kerb, or the kerb behind for that matter! Increase the appeal of your neighbourhood with our verge planting tips (p86) and repurpose op-shop finds into eye-catching homes for your foliage friends (p74).

Connect with activities that spark joy, nurture creativity, and cost little to no money. Our easy meals for under $5 per serve (p24) will have you adding new favourites to your recipe book – and speaking of, download our free cookbook of budget-friendly meals (p11)!

Easter is coming up and the incredible Steph de Sousa is here to help with mouth-watering, choc-loaded recipes (p34), and the clever Justine Schofield has savvy freezer tips to save you time and money (p132).

Don't forget, we love hearing from you more than you can ever imagine. Connect with us on our new reader page (p10).

We hope the many projects in this issue bring you joy, creative inspiration and, ultimately, *great value*.

Megan

Megan Osborne
Editor



Find out how to propagate plants for free on p64.

Photography Will Horner; styling Nonci Nyoni



EDITOR'S PICKS FOR

Smart savings

I put together this list by thinking of ways to add real value to your life. From immediate savings to long-term pay-offs, these buys are a savvy shopper's dream. Plus, visit our online deals page to nab discounts and bargains on all our favourite brands.

1. 360L Ondis24 rain tank, from Amazon, $345.79. A rain barrel like this one can be useful in gardens to reduce water bills. While these tanks do come in green or black – designed to be disguised among your foliage – I prefer the Mediterranean-inspired aesthetic of this faux terracotta.

SCAN ME
Scan this QR code to shop these items and find great deals online.

2. KitchenAid Semi-Automatic Espresso Machine with Burr Grinder in Porcelain White, from Myer, $999. While a decent upfront investment, with the price of coffee these days this barista-worthy machine will quickly become worth its weight in gold.

3. The Essential Living Composter, from Amazon, $197. Great for those with a garden, create your own compost with this cute-as-can-be worm farm. You'll waste less and your garden will thrive!

4. SodaStream E-Terra Sparkling Water Maker, from Myer, $189. If you like your water fresh and fizzy, save money on buying bottles of sparkling and do it yourself.

5. Volvo EX30 Electric Compact SUV, from $67,535. Electric cars have tended to be expensive, but the Volvo EX30 comes in at a more mid-range cost, with no sacrifice on style. The long-term fuel savings on an all-electric vehicle are very attractive.

6. Baccarat Le Connoisseur 31cm cast-iron French sauté pan in Moss, House, $299. Cast iron for your cooking will stand the test of time – sometimes even enough to be handed down through the generations.

7. Ecoya Wild Sage and Citrus Laundry Dryer Ball Set, from Myer, $44.95. Cut drying time and save on electricity bills with these dryer balls made from wool. ■

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April 2025

The Value Issue

ON THE COVER

BE A WINNER!

GARDENING

FOOD

Dont forget to enter our

TRADIE OF THE YEAR COMPETITION

Go to **bhg.com.au/tradie-of-the-year**.
T&Cs apply.

Cover photography Tim Roberts; styling Michele Cranston



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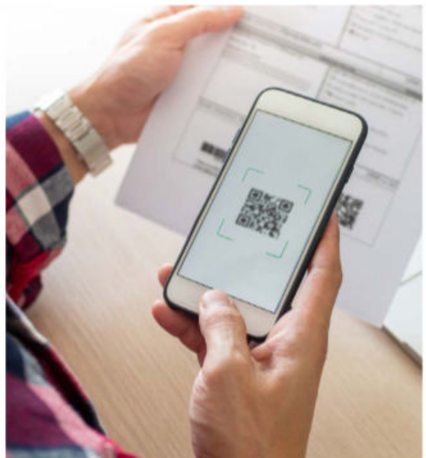
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DECORATING

CRAFT & DIY

SPECIAL FEATURES

REGULAR FEATURES



HOW TO USE A QR CODE

Scan these handy codes across our pages for even more content!

1. Open your phone's camera app.
2. Point your camera towards the QR code, using the rear-facing camera (not the selfie camera).
3. Click on the banner that pops up on your phone screen.
4. Scroll through all the latest from BHG on your phone!

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Every issue we bring you projects and recipes from the show for you to make and cook.









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FOOD

CRAFT

GARDENING



Write to us

From tips, tricks and projects to your greatest stories, we'd love to hear from you.



Letter of the month

I uplifted an old brown stool for a face lift from your DIY page (BHG, Mar 25), adding a navy colour and a white strip. Love it! Thanks for the inspiration!
– ***Pauline***

CONGRATULATIONS!
We loved seeing your project in action. We hope you enjoy this extravagant Easter hamper from Haigh's Chocolates.



Zen time

I look forward to going to my letterbox and sitting with a cup of tea with the next *Better Homes and Gardens* magazine. I read the informed magazine from cover to cover. It's my zen time.
– ***Lisa***

Fairy gardens

I am always inspired by your *Better Homes and Gardens* magazine. I love trying out some of the suggestions to attract butterflies to my garden, bringing in fabulous splashes of colour and a little touch of magic. My grandchildren love what I have achieved. They like to dress up as little fairies and dance along the pathway that winds crookedly through my jacaranda-shaded, front flower garden. It may be a work in progress but I'm loving the adventure of creating something special for me and my family to play in. I'm so glad I ordered your magazine – it is a world of useful information and has helped create joy at home for me and my family.
– ***Jillianne***

Runs in the family

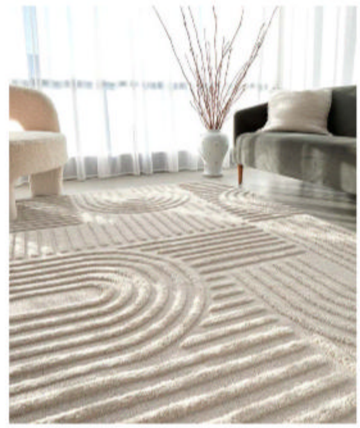
My mum can't wait to receive her BHG issue every month. It waits in the letterbox for her and we go through it together, planning what we'll cook and marvelling over the beautiful gardens and plants. She keeps them all and loves to reread them over and over again. Thank you for continuing to produce a beautiful magazine.
– ***Fiona***

Colour, colour!!!

Loving the March issue. Full of colour, it's got me wonderfully inspired with a rainbow smile. Evie Kemp is a perfect visual explosion to lift anyone's mood. Thought-provoking words of understanding ourselves with colour. We like what we like and if it fills your heart, let's celebrate (that's my take on colour). New ideas for my home are bursting inside me.
– ***Jo***

UP FOR GRABS FOR READERS

Marigold Dior rug in natural by Rug Culture 290x200cm
VALUED AT $1190



Our favourite reader email will receive this stunning textured rug from Rug Culture. It's a perfect base for creating an elegant living room or bedroom.

HOW TO CONTRIBUTE
Scan the code to fill out our online reader letter form, or email us at **bhgmagenquiries@aremedia.com.au** Make sure to include your full name, mailing address, email address, and daytime phone number.



Free cookbook

Download our *Better Budget Meals Cookbook* for loads more value. It's filled with affordable recipe ideas and delicious family favourites. Scan the code and download your free copy! Here's just one of the many tasty recipes you'll find inside.

CHICKPEA AND ZUCCHINI FRITTERS

Preparation time 5 mins
Cooking time 10 mins
Serves 4 (makes 12 fritters)

400g can chickpeas, drained, rinsed
2 small zucchini, coarsely grated
½ red onion, finely sliced
¼ bunch mint, leaves torn
½ cup self-raising flour
2 tsp curry powder
2 eggs
¼ cup milk
Sea-salt flakes and freshly ground black pepper, to season
¼ cup extra virgin olive oil
½ cup Greek-style yoghurt
¼ cup tahini
Coriander leaves, to garnish

STEP 1 Combine chickpeas, zucchini, onion and mint in a large bowl. Set aside.
STEP 2 Sift flour and curry powder in a second large bowl. Add eggs and milk. Stir to combine. Add the batter to the chickpea mixture. Stir until smooth. Season.
STEP 3 Heat oil in a large frying pan on medium heat. Form ¼ cups of chickpea mixture into patties and cook, in batches, for 2 minutes on each side or until set.
STEP 4 Meanwhile, put yoghurt and tahini in a serving bowl. Swirl together. Top with coriander leaves. Serve fritters with yoghurt tahini mixture. ■

SCAN ME
Scan the QR code to download your free *Better Budget Meals Cookbook*.



Make these adorable Easter ducks, page 144.

Better Homes and Gardens.

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Photography Tim Roberts; styling Nonci Nyoni; project Tiff Bancroft


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3 PHONE **136 116 and *quote* M254BHG**

Sprouting SAVINGS



Use store-bought fruit and vegies to start your own crop and save big time!

Tossing your capsicum seeds or carrot tops in the bin can mean throwing away a small fortune! Save those seeds and scraps and you can grow your own fruit and vegies to trim your future grocery bills. Instead of lugging home heavy bags of produce from the supermarket, you can experience the taste of freshly picked ingredients that haven't clocked up food miles or done time in cold storage.

Words JENNY DILLON *Photography* WILL HORNER *Styling* NONCI NYONI





Save *your* scraps

Did you know these fruit and vegies can be regrown from parts of their original form? Most are pretty durable, although some may take longer to grow or perform with less success if they're distant from their ideal growing season.

LETTUCE

Buy a lettuce with its roots still attached and plant in the soil. Remove leaves as you need. The plant will grow more leaves until it's time to bolt, or burst into flower. The flowers produce seeds to sow next season.
Ideal growing season
Spring, summer, autumn.

POTATOES

Cut sprouting potatoes into 4–5cm squares with at least two 'eyes' where the sprouts are growing. Plant in full sun about 8cm deep, 30cm apart, with sprouts facing up. Keep soil moist. They're ready to harvest from 3–5 months – when the leaves turn yellow and flowers appear.
Ideal growing season
Winter in cool climates, autumn in warm climates.

JERUSALEM ARTICHOKE

Cut sprouting artichokes into chunks with at least 1–2 sprouts on each piece. Plant in spring about 10–15cm deep, with sprouts pointing up. Keep soil moist. Yellow flowers will grow tall then wither when tubers are ready to harvest in autumn.
Ideal growing season
Early spring in cool and temperate climates, autumn in warm climates.

PINEAPPLE

Cut off the pineapple top, remove leaves except a few top ones, then leave to dry for a few days. Next, put in shallow water for a few days to root, then plant in soil. A new pineapple can grow in about two years.
Ideal growing season
Spring.

GINGER

Cut a piece with at least one bud. Plant with bud facing up, about 5cm deep. Keep warm and moist.
Ideal growing season
Early spring.





GARLIC
Separate cloves and plant in well-drained soil, 2–5cm deep, pointy end up, and 15cm apart. Water regularly to keep soil moist. NOTE: Use organic garlic that hasn't been sprayed with sprouting inhibitor.
Ideal growing season
Autumn in temperate or cool climates, winter in warm climates.

CARROTS
Cut off the top, place in a saucer of water until lateral roots grow. Place in soil. Use leaves for salads, soups and stews. Harvest flowers for seeds to sow next season.
Ideal growing season
Spring and autumn.

CELERY
Cut off base of celery bunch, place in a shallow bowl of water, cut side up. Keep in a sunny spot and change water daily. Once new shoots appear, plant in soil and watch it grow.
Ideal growing season
Autumn.

SAVE MONEY AND THE PLANET

When food scraps are sent to landfill, they're denied the oxygen needed for them to decompose as they would in a compost heap. Instead, they produce methane, a nasty greenhouse gas that contributes to climate change. So help save the planet and your money by growing fresh produce from these scraps!

> “JUST LIKE WITH COOKING, GROWING YOUR OWN FOOD MAKES IT TASTE THAT MUCH BETTER.”
>
> MEGAN OSBORNE, EDITOR





Plant *the* seed

Many fruit and vegies are easy to grow simply from harvesting the seeds. Results and varieties will change depending on your climate, but why not try your hand and see what you can grow?

WHEN TO SOW

The best times to sow seeds differ depending on your location and climate. **Tropical and subtropical areas:** Sow in seed-raising mix in autumn and winter after the monsoon season. **Temperate, cool and cold regions:** Sow in spring.

HOW TO SOW

- Large seeds, such as beans, can be sown directly in a container or garden bed.
- Smaller seeds do best sown in seed-raising mix in trays or punnets, then transplanted into a larger container or garden bed.
- Keep the growing medium moist, not wet.
- Ensure your growing area gets all-day sun.
- Raise the humidity level by covering the tray or punnet with cling wrap.
- Place the tray or punnet in a warm spot, protected from wind.
- When you transplant seedlings to a garden bed, vine-growing plants need stakes, climbing structures, or space to run along the ground. Put in stakes at the same time as you transplant seedlings, so you don't damage the growing roots.





TIME TO HARVEST

TOMATO
Harvest in 10–12 weeks.

CUCUMBER
Harvest in 7–12 weeks.

CAPSICUM
Harvest in 10–12 weeks.

PUMPKIN
Harvest in 14–17 weeks.

CHILLI
Harvest in 10–12 weeks.

PASSIONFRUIT
Harvest in 12–18 months.

STRAWBERRY
Harvest in 10–14 weeks.

WATERMELON
Harvest in 10–12 weeks.

ROCKMELON
Harvest in 10–14 weeks.

Below are some more fruits you can grow from seed, but they take a minimum three years to mature.

AVOCADO
Easier to grow from grafting.

APPLE
Grafting speeds up the process.

CHERRY
Boasts lovely flowers.

MANGO
Tropical to temperate climates.

PEAR
May require cross-pollination.

PEACH
Grows best in cool climates.

> “SEEDS ARE THE COMPLETE PACKAGE – HOLDING A ROOT, A STEM AND LEAVES!”
>
> JENNY DILLON, GARDEN EDITOR



Saving *and* storing seeds



Depending on your climate zone, now may not be the best time to sow your seeds. If that's the case, they will need to be stored until the time is right.

Extracting seeds can involve scooping them out. For example, this works for tomatoes, cucumbers and members of the pumpkin family. You can pop capsicum, bean and pea seeds straight from the fruit.

Put seeds in a sieve and rinse. Pulp or flesh residue clings to some seeds, such as tomato, cucumber, pumpkin and squash. This needs to be removed. If the tomato or cucumber pulp resists the rinse, rest the seeds in water for a day or two.

Ensure seeds are thoroughly dried to prevent mould and ensure seeds remain viable. Spread seeds in a single layer on paper towels and put in a warm, well-ventilated area, out of direct sunlight, to dry completely.

Put seeds in opaque, airtight containers or seed envelopes. Add a silica gel sachet to the container and/or some grains of rice to absorb any lingering moisture.

Label containers or envelopes with the name of the seed and date of collection. Most seeds maintain their viability for two to three years, but some, such as corn and members of the onion family, last only a year.

Store in a cool, dry spot out of direct sunlight and away from moisture, such as in a cupboard or drawer.

The temperature needs to be consistent, so avoid storing near heating systems or hot appliances.

Check your seeds regularly for signs of mould or moisture. Throw out seeds that are mouldy so they don't contaminate the others.

To test if your seeds are viable, pre-sprout a few. Fold a few seeds inside a wet paper towel, put in a plastic bag and place it in a warm area. If the seeds sprout, all good! If not, they're no longer viable, so feed to the birds.

MYTH BUSTERS

- Don't store seeds in the freezer as they'll become unviable and won't germinate. You can keep your seeds in the fridge if you wish, but that's only if you live in the tropics.
- Only keep seeds moist if you're ready to plant them within weeks. Otherwise they'll quickly germinate then won't thrive if the season isn't compatible.
- Don't store seeds long-term in plastic bags – plastic sweats and the seeds will start to germinate! ■

Additional photography Adobe Stock, Hector Sanchez



SCAN ME
To find out more on growing food from seeds or scraps, scan the code to see our online guide.

BUDGET-FRIENDLY BITES

Make these mouth-watering eats for under $5* per serve. Winner, winner, affordable dinner!

Photography TIM ROBERTS *Styling* MICHELE CRANSTON *Recipes and food preparation* CLARE MAGUIRE



$3.90 per serve

AIR-FRYER SWEET POTATO SKINS WITH CHICKPEA CURRY

Recipe on page 31



$4.95 per serve

ROAST CHICKEN WITH BRAISED FENNEL AND CANNELLINI BEANS

Recipe on page 31

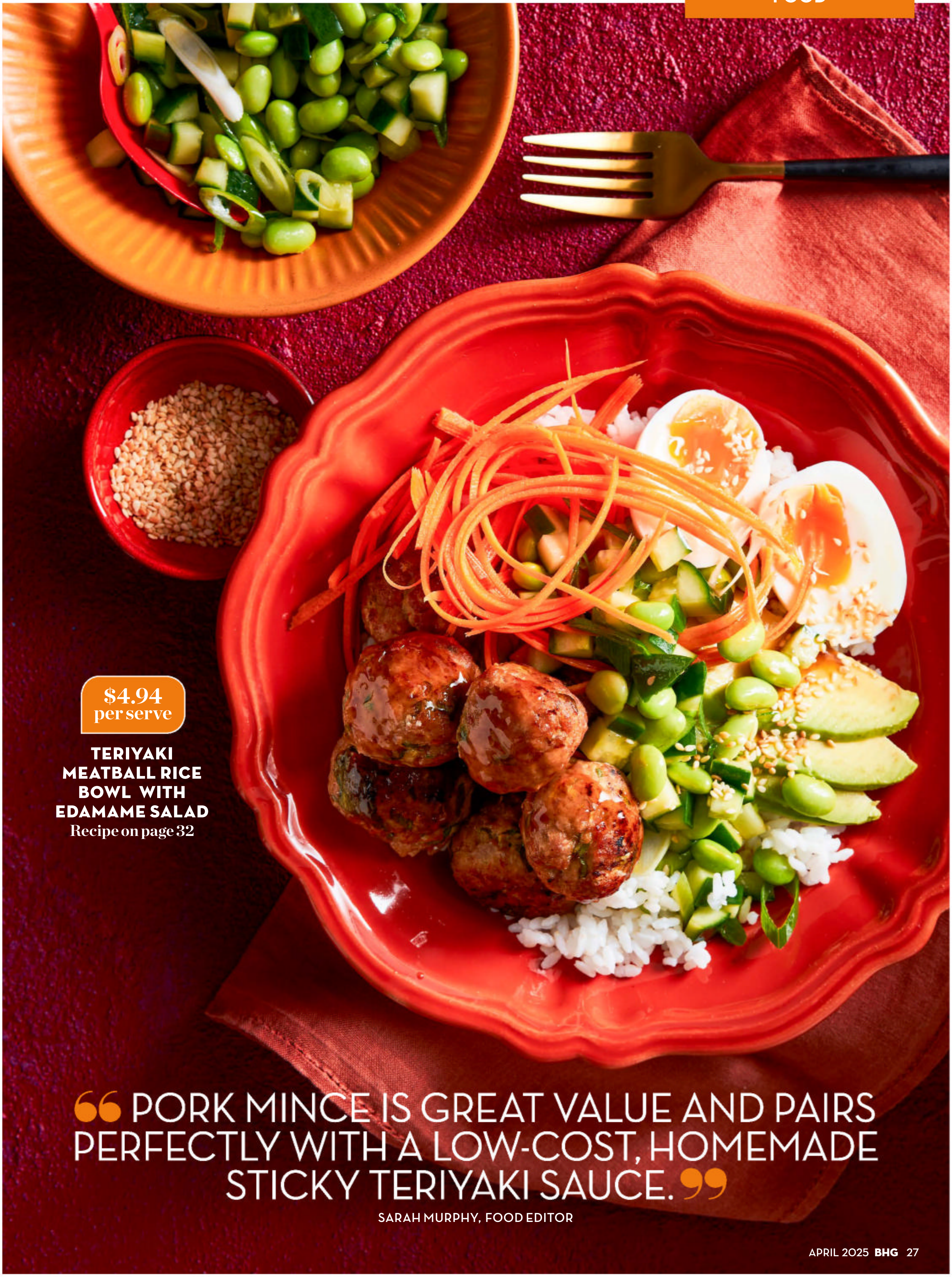
*Cost estimates are based on standard supermarket pricing. Prices may vary depending on location and season.



$4.28 per serve

BROCCOLI RISOTTO WITH PICKLED APPLE AND WALNUTS

Recipe on page 31



$4.94 per serve

TERIYAKI MEATBALL RICE BOWL WITH EDAMAME SALAD

Recipe on page 32

> “PORK MINCE IS GREAT VALUE AND PAIRS PERFECTLY WITH A LOW-COST, HOMEMADE STICKY TERIYAKI SAUCE.”

SARAH MURPHY, FOOD EDITOR



$3.41
per serve

TUNA LINGUINE WITH CAPERS, LEMON AND PARSLEY

Recipe on page 32



“PACKED WITH PANTRY STAPLES, THESE TASTY PUDS ARE JUST AS DELISH AS THEY ARE AFFORDABLE.”

SARAH MURPHY, FOOD EDITOR

$2.34 per serve

INDIVIDUAL LEMON DELICIOUS PUDDINGS

Recipe on page 33



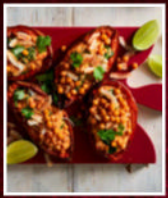
RASPBERRY JELLY LAMINGTONS

Cost $0.62 each
Preparation time 45 mins
Cooking time 25 mins
Makes 10

85g packet raspberry jelly crystals
1 cup boiling water
2½ Tbsp raspberry jam
1½ cups desiccated coconut

HOT MILK SPONGE
4 free-range eggs
⅔ cup caster sugar
1 cup self-raising flour
¼ cup cornflour
½ tsp fine salt
⅓ cup milk
25g cold butter, chopped
1 tsp vanilla extract

STEP 1 Preheat oven to 180°C/160°C fan-forced. Grease and line a 20cm x 30cm lamington pan with baking paper.
STEP 2 For the sponge, in a standing mixer fitted with a whisk attachment, whisk eggs and sugar on medium-high speed for 6–7 minutes or until the mixture holds a trail when the whisk is lifted. Sift flour and cornflour together three times. Stir in salt.
STEP 3 Place milk, butter and vanilla extract in a small saucepan on low heat until the butter has just melted. Keep warm.
STEP 4 Fold sifted flours into the egg mixture using a hand-held whisk. When nearly combined, gently whisk in the hot milk mixture until it's incorporated (batter will be runny).
STEP 5 Pour the batter into the prepared pan and bake for 25 minutes or until the sponge springs back when lightly pressed. Leave to cool in pan for 5 minutes before turning out onto a wire rack to cool completely.
STEP 6 Meanwhile, combine the jelly crystals and boiling water in a medium shallow bowl. Let cool for 10 minutes, then refrigerate 1 hour or until it is the consistency of egg whites.
STEP 7 Trim the sides and top of the cooled sponge. Cut into 20 squares.
STEP 8 Place the coconut in a wide shallow bowl. Spread jam on half the squares, then sandwich together with the remaining squares. Taking one cake stack at a time, dip it in the jelly mixture, coating all sides, then shake off any excess. Roll in coconut and return to the wire rack. Refrigerate cakes for 1 hour before serving.



AIR-FRYER SWEET POTATO SKINS WITH CHICKPEA CURRY

Cost $3.90 per serve
Preparation time 10 mins
Cooking time 1 hour
Serves 4

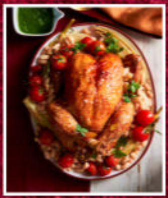
4 medium sweet potatoes
Olive oil spray
Toasted coconut flakes, coriander leaves, mixed salad, to serve

CHICKPEA CURRY
2 Tbsp vegetable or coconut oil
1 brown onion, finely chopped
2 Tbsp leftover curry paste of your choice (we used red, see tips)
Finely grated zest and halves of 1 lime
165ml can coconut milk
2 x 400g cans chickpeas, drained, rinsed (see tips)
120g fresh or 60g frozen spinach, thawed

STEP 1 Preheat air fryer to 200°C for 3 minutes. Use a fork to pierce potatoes several times, then spray with olive oil spray. Cook potatoes for 25 minutes. Turn, then cook for a further 20 minutes or until a knife easily reaches the centre. Transfer to a large tray or plate. Set aside to cool slightly (see tip).
STEP 2 When potatoes are cool enough to handle, slice in half lengthways. Leaving a ½ cm border, scoop out the flesh and transfer to a bowl. Spray skins on both sides with oil spray. Return half the skins to the air fryer to cook for 6 minutes or until crispy. Repeat with remaining skins.
STEP 3 For the curry, heat 1 tablespoon oil in a medium saucepan on medium heat. Add onion and a pinch of salt, then cook for 7–8 minutes or until translucent and golden. Add curry paste and lime zest, then cook for 1 minute or until fragrant. Add the coconut milk and chickpeas, then bring to a low simmer for 3 minutes. Add the potato flesh and cook, stirring, for 1–2 minutes, until thickened slightly. Add spinach, stirring until it wilts. Remove from heat. Squeeze in juice of half a lime. Season.
STEP 4 Cut remaining lime half into 4 wedges. Divide potato skins between plates. Spoon in curry. Top with coconut flakes and coriander leaves. Serve with lime wedges and salad.

COOK'S TIPS

Use any kind of curry paste here, adding more or less according to your taste. You can swap the chickpeas with any can of beans or pulses you have to hand. The potatoes can be cooked a day in advance and stored in an airtight container in the fridge.



ROAST CHICKEN WITH BRAISED FENNEL AND CANNELLINI BEANS

Cost $4.95 per serve
Preparation time 15 mins
Cooking time 2 hours
Serves 6

2kg whole chicken, legs tied
Sea-salt flakes and freshly ground black pepper, to season
1 bulb fennel, fronds reserved, cut into small wedges
1 large brown onion, thickly sliced
1 lemon, thinly sliced
2 x 400g cans cannellini beans
3 sprigs rosemary, sage or thyme
1 tsp sweet paprika
2 Tbsp extra virgin olive oil, plus extra to drizzle
1 bulb garlic, halved
2 cups chicken stock
400g can cherry tomatoes

DIJON DRESSING
½ cup parsley leaves, plus extra, to serve
1 Tbsp dijon mustard
1 garlic clove, crushed
⅓ cup olive oil

STEP 1 Preheat oven to 210°C/190°C fan-forced. Season chicken. Drain cannellini beans. Place fennel, onion, lemon, cannellini beans, rosemary, paprika and oil in a large deep roasting dish. Toss well to coat, then season. Place the chicken on top and garlic halves around the side. Drizzle with extra oil. Carefully pour stock into the base of the pan. Cover pan with foil and roast for 1 hour 45 minutes, basting occasionally with the pan juices.
STEP 2 Remove the foil, add the tomatoes, then return the pan to the oven. Cook, uncovered, for a further 30 minutes or until the chicken is golden and cooked through. Remove from the oven, cover loosely with foil and leave to rest for 15 minutes.
STEP 3 While the chicken is resting, make the dressing. Combine all the ingredients in a small blender and blitz until smooth. Season to taste.
STEP 4 Top the chicken and beans with the reserved fennel fronds and extra parsley. Serve with the dressing.

COOK'S TIP

To make your chicken go further, use the chicken carcass to make stock.



BROCCOLI RISOTTO WITH PICKLED APPLE AND WALNUTS

Cost $4.28 per serve
Preparation time 15 mins
Cooking time 50 mins
Serves 4

100g butter
1 large brown onion, finely chopped
2 cloves garlic, crushed
1 tsp fennel seeds
1½ cups arborio (risotto) rice
3¼ cups vegetable stock, hot
400g frozen broccoli florets
1 cup grated parmesan cheese, plus extra, to serve

60g baby spinach leaves
½ cup toasted walnuts, roughly chopped

PICKLED APPLE
¼ cup apple cider vinegar
3 tsp caster sugar
1½ Tbsp water
1 large granny smith apple, cored, sliced into thin batons

STEP 1 Heat the butter in a large shallow pan on medium heat. Add onion and cook for 5 minutes. Add garlic and fennel seeds and cook for a further 5 minutes or until golden. Add rice to the pan and cook for 1–2 minutes, then add ½ cup stock. Stir occasionally, allowing the stock to absorb before adding the remaining stock, ½ cup at a time, until the rice is creamy but still a little al dente, about 30–35 minutes.
STEP 2 Meanwhile, to pickle the apple, combine vinegar, sugar and water in a small bowl. Stir to dissolve the sugar, then add apple slices and set aside, tossing occasionally.
STEP 3 Bring a large saucepan of salted water to a boil. Add broccoli and cook for 3 minutes or until tender. Reserve ½ cup of the cooking water, then drain. Transfer the broccoli and reserved water to a food processor and blitz until smooth.
STEP 4 Add broccoli puree to the rice, stir to combine, then add the parmesan, spinach and ¼ cup pickling liquid. Stir for 1–2 minutes or until the spinach is just wilted and the liquid is absorbed. Season.
STEP 5 Serve risotto with the pickled apple, walnuts, extra parmesan and black pepper.

COOK'S TIPS

Reserve the remaining apple pickling liquid, whisk in some olive oil and use it as a salad dressing for another meal. You can use butter instead of olive oil. Frozen broccoli can be substituted with 3½ cups frozen peas or 1 large fresh broccoli.



TERIYAKI MEATBALL RICE BOWL WITH EDAMAME SALAD

Cost $4.94 per serve
Preparation time 30 mins
Cooking time 30 mins
Serves 4

1½ cups sushi (or shortgrain) rice
1¾ cups (430ml) cold water
1 large carrot, julienned
1 avocado, sliced
4 soft-boiled eggs, halved
Toasted sesame seeds, to serve

MEATBALLS
500g pork mince
4 green onions, thinly sliced
4cm piece ginger, finely grated
¼ cup breadcrumbs
1 Tbsp soy sauce
2 tsp sesame oil
1 free-range egg, lightly whisked
2 Tbsp vegetable oil

EDAMAME SALAD
1 Tbsp sesame oil
1 Tbsp rice vinegar
2 tsp honey (or brown sugar)
200g packet frozen edamame beans, thawed
1 lebanese cucumber, diced
2 green onions, thinly sliced

TERIYAKI SAUCE
2½ Tbsp soy sauce
2 Tbsp honey (or brown sugar)
1 garlic clove, crushed
⅔ cup water, plus 2 Tbsp extra
2 tsp cornflour

STEP 1 Place sushi rice in a sieve and rinse under cold running water until the water runs clear. Transfer to a medium saucepan, add water, cover, and bring to a simmer over medium heat. Reduce heat to low and cook for 15 minutes. Without taking off the lid, remove from heat and leave to stand for 10 minutes. Fluff up rice with a fork just before serving.
STEP 2 Meanwhile, for the meatballs, combine all ingredients (except oil) in a large bowl and season. Roll tablespoonfuls into meatballs. You will have about 18 in total (see tip).
STEP 3 Heat vegetable oil in large frying pan over medium-high heat. Add meatballs and cook, turning occasionally, for 12–15 minutes or until cooked through.
STEP 4 For the edamame salad, place sesame oil, rice vinegar and honey in a medium bowl, then whisk with a fork to combine. Add remaining ingredients and toss to coat. Season to taste.
STEP 5 For the teriyaki sauce, combine soy sauce, honey, garlic and water in a small saucepan on medium heat and bring to a simmer. In a small bowl, stir cornflour and extra water until smooth. Add cornflour mix to the pan and cook, stirring, for 2–3 minutes or until the sauce is thick and smooth.
STEP 6 To serve, divide rice between bowls, top with edamame salad, egg, meatballs, carrot and avocado. Drizzle meatballs with teriyaki sauce. Sprinkle with sesame seeds.

COOK'S TIPS

Meatballs can be made up to a day in advance and stored uncooked on a covered tray in the fridge. Add sliced red chilli to your bowl for a spicy kick.



TUNA LINGUINE WITH CAPERS, LEMON AND PARSLEY

Cost $3.41 per serve
Preparation time 5 mins
Cooking time 15 mins
Serves 4

300g linguine
425g can tuna in olive oil, oil reserved
250g cherry tomatoes, halved
⅓ cup capers

3 cloves garlic, thinly sliced
1 tsp chilli flakes (optional)
Finely grated zest and juice of 1 lemon
1 cup parsley leaves, roughly chopped
Sea-salt flakes and freshly ground black pepper, to season
Extra virgin olive oil, to serve

STEP 1 Bring a large pan of salted water to the boil. Add pasta and cook according to package instructions until al dente. Reserve ⅓ cup of the pasta water, then drain.
STEP 2 Meanwhile, heat ⅓ cup of the reserved oil from the tuna in a large frying pan on medium heat. Add the tomatoes, capers, garlic and chilli flakes. Cook for 3–4 minutes or until fragrant. Add the drained pasta, lemon zest, juice and reserved pasta water. Using tongs, toss for 1 minute or until the pasta is lightly coated. Stir in the drained tuna and three-quarters of the parsley. Season.
STEP 3 Divide pasta between bowls, sprinkle with reserved parsley, extra black pepper and drizzle with extra virgin olive oil.





INDIVIDUAL LEMON DELICIOUS PUDDINGS

Cost $2.34 per serve
Preparation time 40 mins
Cooking time 25 mins
Serves 6

½ cup caster sugar
Finely grated zest of 1 lemon
40g unsalted butter, melted, plus extra for greasing
3 free-range eggs, separated
½ tsp salt
¼ cup self-raising flour
⅓ cup lemon juice
1 tsp vanilla extract
1¼ cups whole milk
¼ cup flaked almonds
Lemon curd, whipped cream or ice cream, to serve

CANDIED LEMON (OPTIONAL)
½ cup caster sugar
½ cup water
1 lemon, very thinly sliced

STEP 1 If making the candied lemon, combine the sugar and water in a small shallow frying pan on low heat, then simmer until sugar dissolves. Add lemon slices and gently simmer for 20–25 minutes or until the lemon slices turn translucent. Transfer to a greased cooling rack.
STEP 2 Preheat oven to 180°C/160°C fan-forced. Grease six shallow 1-cup (250ml) capacity dishes with extra butter. Place in a large roasting pan (if the dishes don't all fit, divide between two pans).
STEP 3 Place sugar and zest in a large bowl, then rub together with your fingers for 1 minute to release the lemon oils. Add melted butter, yolks and ½ teaspoon salt, then whisk until smooth. Add flour, lemon juice and vanilla. Whisk again. Slowly add milk, whisking until combined. Set aside.
STEP 4 In a separate bowl, whisk egg whites with an electric hand-held mixer until soft peaks form. Using a large whisk and in three batches, fold the egg whites into the lemon mixture (see Cook's Tip).
STEP 5 Divide mixture among dishes, then sprinkle with flaked almonds. Place roasting pan in oven. Carefully pour boiling water into the base of the tin until it comes halfway up the sides of the dishes. Bake for 20–25 minutes, until puddings are just golden and wobble slightly. Transfer dishes to a plate. Serve immediately, topped with lemon curd, whipped cream or ice cream and candied lemon.

COOK'S TIP

Folding in egg whites using a whisk allows the egg whites to be incorporated quickly and easily with minimum air loss. This helps produce a light, fluffy pudding. ■



EASTER BASQUE CHOC BLISS
Recipe on page 40

CHOCCY CHEER

Dig in this Easter with savvy Steph de Sousa's easy and delish ideas!

Photography TIM ROBERTS *Styling* MICHELE CRANSTON *Recipes* STEPH DE SOUSA



Steph de Sousa is one of the most recognisable cooks online. Her clever recipe videos constantly go viral on social media and her website *Easy Recipe Gang* is filled with budget-friendly meals for every night of the week. To celebrate Easter and all things chocolate, Steph created four choc-loaded recipes for BHG that are perfect for Easter eating! We chat to Steph about her tips for budgeting and what she's up to this Easter.



BHG: What's your go-to cost-saving dinner tip?
S: My favourite cost-saving dinner tip is to plan. If you don't plan you often end up buying too many ingredients or not enough. You can't cook the dish properly and it isn't enjoyable to eat.
BHG: What are your tips for sticking to a budget at the supermarket?
S: You've got to write a list and you need to know what you're going to be cooking for the week or for a couple of days. If you don't plan, you'll end up with things in your supermarket trolley that you just didn't intend to buy and then your budget is blown.
BHG: What do you save and splurge on when you're shopping at the supermarket?
S: I like to save on things like fruit and vegetables. I try to buy in-season which always saves me money. The thing I splurge on the most is a good steak. I feel like you've got to buy a decent steak for it to be delicious.
BHG: What's your favourite thing about cooking for family?
S: It's probably the sitting down and eating! I love cooking for family but I also love cooking extras, so I can send it home with them to save them money.
BHG: What's on your Easter lunch menu this year?
S: Easter lunch is quite similar to Christmas – a roast turkey, ham and all the vegies. There will absolutely be a pavlova but it will have chocolate on it!

> "I LOVE COOKING EXTRAS FOR FAMILY, SO I CAN SEND IT HOME WITH THEM TO SAVE THEM MONEY."
> STEPH DE SOUSA

BHG: How do you like to use up leftover Easter eggs?
S: One of the things we always do after Easter, once everyone's had enough chocolate eggs, is make chocolate brownies. We cut them up, pop them in ziplock bags and freeze in individual portions for easy lunchbox snacks. We also love melting leftover eggs down to make hot chocolate.
BHG: What's your favourite way to use chocolate in cooking?
S: I absolutely love using chocolate in sweets and desserts, but I also really like to cook Mexican food with a little bit of dark chocolate in it. Trust me, it tastes really good!

Keep an eye out on BHG socials for fun behind-the-scenes content from Steph's shoot, plus some exclusive how-to videos! For more on Steph, scan the QR code.



EGGSTRA CRUNCHY NESTS
Recipe on page 40



BUNNY HUG HOT CHOCOLATE
Recipe on page 40



HOPPY CHOC PUDDLE PUDDING

Recipe on page 40



EASTER BASQUE CHOC BLISS

Preparation time 10 mins plus overnight chilling
Cooking time 45–60 mins
Serves 8

3 x 250g blocks cream cheese, at room temperature
1 cup caster sugar
300ml thickened cream
¼ cup plain flour
¼ cup cocoa
1 tsp coffee powder
5 free-range eggs
200g dark chocolate, chopped
Whipped cream, raspberries, assorted chocolate eggs, to serve

STEP 1 Preheat oven to 220°C/200°C fan-forced. Double line a 20cm springform pan with baking paper.
STEP 2 Place cream cheese and sugar in a food processor and pulse until smooth. Add cream, flour, cocoa, coffee and eggs. Pulse until smooth.
STEP 3 Pour mixture into prepared pan, bake 45–60 minutes. The top will look dark and almost burnt, and the middle will be wobbly.
STEP 4 Turn off oven and let the cheesecake cool inside for 15 minutes. Transfer to a wire rack, leave to cool for 1 hour. Refrigerate overnight to set.
STEP 5 Just before serving, melt chocolate in the microwave in 30-second bursts, until melted and smooth. Pile cheesecake with cream, raspberries, drizzle with melted chocolate and decorate with Easter eggs.





EGGSTRA CRUNCHY NESTS

Preparation time 10 mins plus 30 mins setting
Cooking time 2 mins
Makes 10

200g milk chocolate (or half/half milk and dark)
100g fried noodles
2 Tbsp desiccated or shredded coconut
125g mini Easter eggs, crushed, to serve

STEP 1 Melt chocolate in 30-second bursts in the microwave, stirring each time until smooth.
STEP 2 Stir the fried noodles and coconut into the melted chocolate, until completely covered.
STEP 3 Using about 2 tablespoons of mixture at a time, scoop rounds onto a baking paper-lined tray, then use the spoon's back to shape into little nests.
STEP 4 Pop a few mini eggs into each nest, then chill in the fridge for 30 minutes until set.



BUNNY HUG HOT CHOCOLATE

Preparation time 2 mins
Cooking time 2 mins
Makes 2

1½ cups milk
1 Tbsp cocoa powder
200g hollow chocolate eggs
½ cup whipped cream
6 marshmallows
6 mini chocolate eggs

STEP 1 Heat milk and cocoa powder in a saucepan on medium heat until almost boiling. Remove from heat.
STEP 2 Crush hollow chocolate eggs and divide between two mugs.
STEP 3 Pour hot milk over crushed chocolate and stir for 30 seconds until smooth.
STEP 4 Serve topped with whipped cream, marshmallows and crushed mini eggs.



HOPPY CHOC PUDDLE PUDDING

Preparation time 15 mins
Cooking time 35 mins
Serves 4

½ cup milk
1 free-range egg
100g unsalted butter, melted
1 cup self-raising flour
3 Tbsp cocoa
½ cup brown sugar
Vanilla ice cream, Easter eggs, to serve

SAUCE
2 Tbsp cocoa
¾ cup brown sugar
1¼ cups boiling water

STEP 1 Preheat oven to 180°C/160°C fan-forced. Grease a 1.5-litre baking dish.
STEP 2 In a bowl, whisk together the milk, egg and melted butter.
STEP 3 Add the flour, cocoa and sugar, then whisk until smooth. Spoon batter into prepared dish.
STEP 4 For the sauce, mix cocoa and brown sugar together, then sprinkle it evenly over the batter.
STEP 5 Hold a large metal spoon upside down over the batter and gently pour the boiling water over the back of the spoon (using a spoon to pour water over keeps the cake light and fluffy).
STEP 6 Bake 30–35 minutes, until the top is set and the sauce is bubbling underneath. Serve warm with ice cream and Easter eggs. ■

Food preparation Mel Burge



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Desirable DUPES

Get gorgeous interiors with these affordable options.

Words MEGAN OSBORNE

Achieve a high-end look for your home without the hefty price tag. We've researched some of the most innovative materials and clever design solutions around so you can create a premium finish for less. Read on for some great dupe ideas to try out in your home.



Take a SEAT

Designer furniture can set you back, and not just on a recliner. Whether it's a chair, a couch or a dining table, a statement piece can make a room, but it doesn't need to cost you an arm or a (chair) leg.

Many brands now offer ranges inspired by iconic designer pieces. If you're clever, you can sometimes find options that are just as durable as their pricier counterparts.

Try typing 'dupe.com/' in front of the URL for a product you love. You can also use Google reverse image search to find similar-looking items that might be more within your spending appetite!





FLOORED *by a good deal*

Wooden floorboards are indisputably classic, but they do come with a larger price tag and ongoing maintenance. Modern versions of engineered timber and vinyl planks can offer the same timeless aesthetic at a fraction of the price.

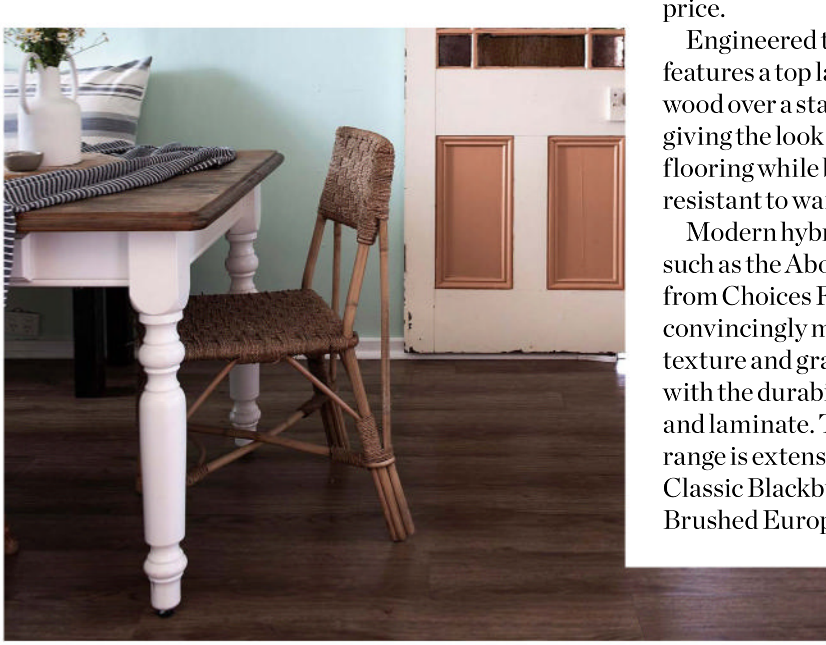
Engineered timber features a top layer of real wood over a stable core, giving the look of solid flooring while being more resistant to warping.

Modern hybrid options, such as the Abode Collection from Choices Flooring, convincingly mimic the texture and grain of timber, with the durability of vinyl and laminate. The colour range is extensive, from Classic Blackbutt through to Brushed European Oak.

TOP TIP

FLOORBOARDS ARE INDISPUTABLY CLASSIC... FIND THE SAME TIMELESS LOOK FOR A **FRACTION OF THE PRICE**.









STAIN GAME

Bring the beauty of stained glass into your home (above). To get this look, discard the backing from a used or new picture frame. Remove glass from the frame and clean it. Using a self-adhesive lead strip, unroll the leading. The leading comes with a crease in the centre; it can be torn in half if a thinner leading strip is preferred. Snip the centre of the leading with scissors. Once started, it is easy to tear apart by hand. Adhere your leading design to the glass. Paint colours onto glass using Vitrail glass paint. Mix paint with a lightening medium if you want a more translucent colour. The paints are mixable and can be made more pastel by adding white. When the paint is dry, reinsert the glass in the frame.



GLASS *act*

Stained-glass windows can do wonders to elevate your home, but unless it's an original feature, adding coloured glass can come with a hefty price tag. If you're looking for an alternative, did you know there are a variety of stick-on film options that replicate the look of stained glass? Cost effective, and often easy to install and remove, they're a great way to add vibrant colour and decorative effect without the cost of custom glasswork.



In the DETAIL

Sometimes the smallest features can make a world of difference. From light switches to door handles and dresser knobs, it's simple to source decorative or modern options that help lift the look of a room.

Lighting fixtures can also be an investment – not only to buy, but also to install. However, you can now buy battery-operated or plug-in wall sconces, adding a warm, rich tone to your space, and helping you rest easy knowing you didn't have to pay an electrician!

For your lounge area, consider mixing up the textures and sizes of your cushions. A splash of velvet or a decorative pillow can go a long way in elevating the vibe. A quick stop at Kmart will have you sorted with a couchful of cushions without breaking the bank.

Oversized mirrors, art prints, even considering placing items such as fruit bowls in your living area, can all contribute to the feeling of a richly decorated space. Only you need to know how much you *actually* spent on it!

TOP TIP
ONLY YOU NEED TO KNOW HOW MUCH YOU *ACTUALLY* SPENT ON IT!

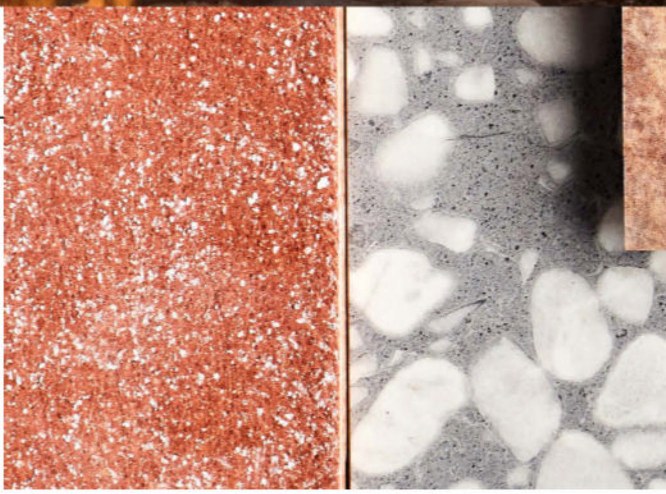








STEEL *yourself*



Whether it's for a fence, roofing, or even cladding, steel is a great building material to consider for initial affordability and longevity. It's also a quick way to dramatically change the overall appearance of a building. For the roof, a steel option such as Colorbond or Zincalume is more budget-friendly and faster to install than many tile choices, and may require less structural support. Steel is also resistant to extreme weather conditions, rust and corrosion, and doesn't need the same regular replacement that tiles do.

DID YOU KNOW?

PORCELAIN IS **EASIER TO CLEAN** AND MAINTAIN THAN MARBLE.

Not set in STONE

Swathes of dreamy Calacatta or Carrara marble – or any marble really! – certainly make an impact, but now modern technology has developed porcelain look-alikes that are very close to the real thing.

These porcelain dupes often come in multiple sizes, from small tiles to large format, think 1.2 metres. Not only are they more affordable, but when used in a bathroom or kitchen, porcelain is much easier to clean and maintain, and more resistant to stains and scratching.





SCAN ME
Scan this QR code to shop these desirable dupes and more!



A glam GARDEN

Garden furniture, planters, decorations and lighting can sometimes come with an eye-watering price tag. Second-hand stores are a great place to search, but if you're looking for new and still wanting to save, opt for swapping solid teak and wrought iron with powder-coated metal or a high-quality composite. When it comes to lighting, solar-powered light features and LED string lights do wonders to create an inviting upmarket atmosphere without the expensive installation.

TRUST IN THE PROFESSIONALS

Not sure where to start on product selection? Then ask your builder. Let them know your budget and they should be able to point you in the right direction for products and reliable suppliers. For hassle-free help, get them to order the product for you! They will likely charge a mark-up, but they may also get a trade discount, so it balances out. And remember, you can manage tradie payments with confidence when you use the free Witzer app (download it from the App Store or Google Play). ■

upholster an armchair

(IN HALF A WEEKEND)

Love up an old chair with bold fabric and a staple gun.



Words MALLORY ABREU + NICOLE CROWDER
Photography NICOLE CROWDER *Illustrations* LUCY TRUMAN

PICK AND PREP YOUR CHAIR

SHOP AROUND

It's easy to fall in love with a vintage find, but it pays to be a little picky. If the wood is warped or cracked or has holes, give it a miss. If it's an intact piece with a hardwood frame – maple, walnut, oak, teak or rosewood – get excited. That's quality stuff! Remember to check for any sagging coils or webbing in the seat, too. You might need to get professional help to fix it.

IT'S HARD TO CHANGE A WOOD'S FINISH

If you want to keep your project to one weekend, pick a chair with a finish you can live with. Don't choose a dark wood if you want a light finish, for example. Or don't choose a painted piece if you don't like paint. Sanding and stripping back wood to that extent takes special tools, time and knowledge.

REVIVE THE WOOD

You can use a natural wax finish to bring out the wood grain. First, remove water stains by scrubbing the wood with warm, soapy water. After it dries, use a terry-towelling facecloth to buff on a polish and conditioner such as Howard Feed-N-Wax. If the exposed timber has scratches, sun fade or white heat rings, a wipe-on and wipe-off of Howard Restor-A-Finish in a similar colour may help.

WEEKEND MAKEOVER

You can likely knock out a basic armchair (without removable cushions) in three to five hours with this simple guide.



STEP 1 Take off all the piping (also known as welting) from the chair. Once all the rough fabric edges are exposed, pull out the staples to release the fabric, keeping each section as a complete piece and labelling it with its location.



STEP 2 Lay the old fabric sections wrong side up on the wrong side of your new fabric. Trace around the old section, adding 10cm on every side. Cut out and label each piece.



STEP 3 If the chair filling is worn, stained or smells musty, remove it. Cut to fit and layer the following: upholstery foam then cotton wadding for more cushioning. Staple Dacron polyester fibre over those to smooth out any lumps.



STEP 4 Staple new fabric to the inside lip of the seat's wood frame, making sure the fabric is taut as you work around the edge. On the inside and outside backs, start at one arm and staple at the top and bottom as you work toward the other arm.



STEP 5 Around curved surfaces like the inside and outside backs, snip 2.5cm incisions to avoid pleats. Stretch the next portion you'll be stapling, snip to make the fabric more flexible, smooth any pleats, then staple. Trim excess fabric once the entire edge is stapled.



STEP 6 Hot-glue piping (you can sew your own or buy it) over staples between the fabric and the frame. Finish the underside by stapling on a dustcover of muslin that has been cut to fit. To finish the chair, spray fabric with a protective coating like Scotchgard.

TOOLS OF THE TRADE

Your essentials for tackling any upholstery job.



NEEDLE-NOSE PLIERS
Use these to remove old staples and piping. To remove piping, start pulling up from where the ends meet.



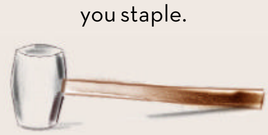
STAPLE GUN
Choose a staple gun that takes 8mm staples. These sink just deep enough into the timber frame for upholstery projects.



BOX CUTTER
The razor point neatly removes old filling and cuts pieces of foam and cotton for refilling a chair.



FLATHEAD SCREWDRIVER
Use this to loosen glued-on piping (welting) and to tuck fabric into the frame as you staple.



RUBBER MALLET
Use it to flatten raised staples and hammer in nailhead trims without damaging the fabric or wood. ■



BLIND SPOT

Don't be blind to adding value to your home. These clever solutions from Tuiss help you save with style.

While a bare window can make a home look a little, well, naked, a thoughtfully chosen curtain or blind can do wonders to enhance both the aesthetic and functionality in your home.

When looking for the right blind, consider what you value most to get a bargain and to reap long-term benefits. With a little help from our friends at Tuiss (**BlindsOnline.com.au**), who deliver both affordability and innovation, here are some top tips to get the best bang for your buck, without being robbed blind!

SCAN ME
Scan this QR code to shop these blinds and more.





Cut down your energy bills by fitting honeycomb blinds.

SAVE ON INSTALLATION

Did you know there are no-drill solutions when it comes to blinds? Save money on a handyman and make DIY installations stress-free with options in a range of designs, such as Twist2Fit roller blinds from $32, Click2Fit Roman blinds from $71, or the brand new Stick2Fit honeycomb from $46. Anyone can take on a DIY task this simple.

SAVE WITH ENERGY EFFICIENCY

Yes, your blinds can impact the bills you get each month. The innovative technology in honeycomb blinds can help keep your home warm in winter and cool in summer, resulting in gas and electricity bills becoming more manageable. This clever insulation technology comes in many options to offer both convenience and style to your space.



Curtains in Dill Ochre by Clarissa Hulse.

“OUR HOMES ARE AN EXPRESSION OF OURSELVES. ALL OF US ARE COLOURFUL, EVEN THE MOST QUIET AND SUBTLE OF US.”

– CLARISSA HULSE

SAVE WITH STYLE

A bold and well-designed window treatment could be the statement piece your lounge, bedroom or even kitchen is missing. Buying custom fabric from a designer can get expensive fast, but with some amazing collaborations at price points that won’t break the bank, Tuiss boasts collector-worthy designs from Liberty, Emma Bridgewater, V&A William Morris, Sanderson, Harlequin, Clarissa Hulse and more.

We spoke to Clarissa about her creative process. “Walking around the countryside I take hundreds of photographs and pick any stalks that I find particularly interesting. I either press them carefully, or take them back to my studio.” From there, Clarissa plays around with a combination of hand drawing, generating patters using the computer, silk screen motifs and hand painting.

“I still prefer designing using old-fashioned painting and drawing than doing everything on the computer,” she says.

“My mission is to inspire people to see the beauty in nature, and to bring it into their homes, so seeing this makes my job complete.”



Roman blind in V&A William Morris Pimpernel Sage.

Colour is also a key part of her range. “Our homes are an expression of ourselves. All of us are colourful, even the most quiet and subtle of us.”

Prices start at $56 for the Sanderson range, $72 for the Clarissa Hulse range, $98 for the Liberty range, $93 for the V&A William Morris range and $72 for the Emma Bridgewater range.



Emma Bridgewater’s playful designs bring joyful colour to your space.





Curtains of Sanderson Ikat Damask Ink Blue are worthy of a feature moment.





The Enjoy Dimout Zinc Zebra roller blind alternates blackout strips with sheer panels.

SAVE TIME WITH SMART TECH

Yes – even your blinds can be automated now!

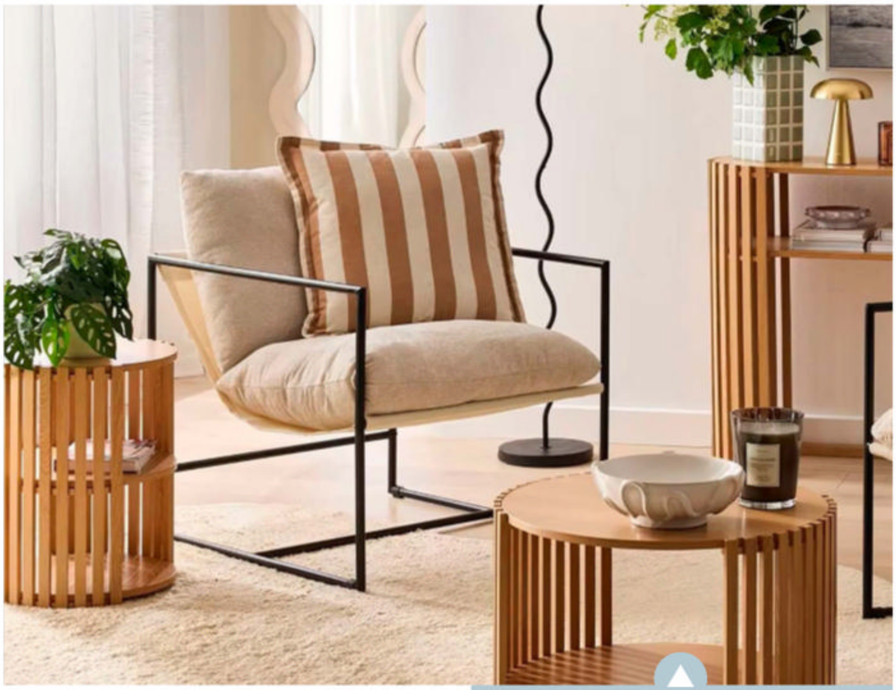
Want to make sure that sleepy teenager gets up in time for school? Or do you prefer to wake from natural sunlight streaming through your window, rather than with a grating phone alarm? You can set your blinds to a timer using a clever app, or control your blinds with the touch of your smartphone.

If you expect that to be super pricey, prepare to be surprised. SmartView motors that fit to a roller blind are priced from about $130, and motors suitable for Roman blinds are from $150. ■

better decorating

[THE LATEST PRODUCTS AND HOME INTERIOR TRENDS WITH JADA SUSAS]

SCAN ME
Scan this QR code to shop these items.





GALLERY AT HOME

Here's how to have world-famous art at home on a budget. Download favourite pieces from The Met's Open Access collection for free! Choose from more than 375,000 artworks, then print them out to create a home gallery. Search for "The Met Open Access" to start.



MAKE IT POP

If you're craving colour, stripe right with this nectar-kissed vase by Australian glass designer Ben David. KAS Candy cylinder vase in peach, $129, from Domayne.

LUXURY FOR LESS

Look to Kmart's new home collection for a chic feel that won't break the bank. This chair is a versatile statement piece, with its tasteful steel frame and cushions you can sink into. It's also easy to assemble, and already proving popular! Marlo lounge chair, $99, from Kmart.

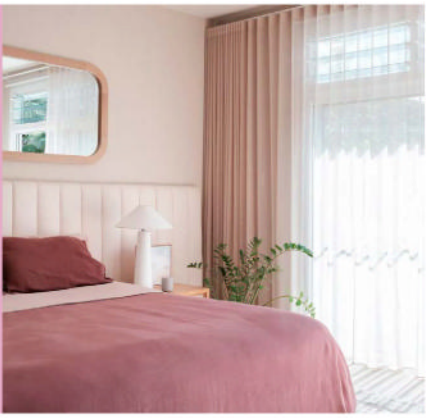


GO RETRO

This coffee table combines past and present style to perfection. With its retro-look oval top, slatted pedestal base and understated neutral finish, it could meld with almost any decorating scheme. Claire coffee table, $1199, from Harvey Norman. ■

LET THE LIGHT IN

When was the last time you swapped your curtains out? You can glow up a room with Carpet Court's semi-sheer Bali collection. The curtains are UV and stain resistant, and evenly diffuse natural light into your home.



Prices are approximate and a guide only.

Save with Charlie's garden basics

Use these failsafe basics to make your garden thrive!

Words JENNY DILLON *Photography* ALAN JENSEN



Coastal rosemary (*Westringia* spp) and creeping boobialla (*Myoporum* spp) both love sandy soil.



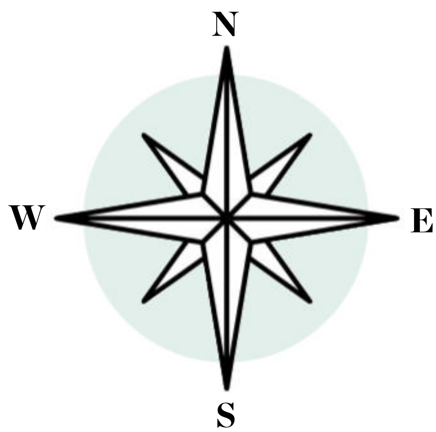
CHARLIE ALBONE
Join me as I plant out these lovely garden beds on *BHG* TV, Friday, March 7 at 7pm on Channel 7.
(Apologies, may be subject to change.)
For more garden tips, go to **BHG.COM.AU**

SEEN ON BHG TV FRIDAYS 7.00

Creating a new garden bed – or three – can be expensive. But with the three basics of good gardening, you can ensure your garden thrives for a long time! Those basics are aspect, watering and soil. Spending a small amount of time getting to understand your garden's most vital support network will always lead to success rather than budget-busting losses.

Aspect

Make several visits during the day to the spot where you have or are planning to install a garden bed. Determine where the sun lands in the morning, at noon and in the afternoon.



North facing: Sun most or all of the day
South facing: Shade most or all of the day
East facing: Morning sun, afternoon shade
West facing: Morning shade, afternoon sun

- **Check plant labels** while you wander around your local nursery – they tell you how much sun or shade a plant needs.
- **Many plants love all-day sun,** especially vegies. Take into account neighbouring buildings or trees – in winter when the sun is low in the sky, a northerly, all-day sun aspect may be blocked. You may be better off planting spring and summer sun-loving annuals.
- **Plants that love the shade** include understorey plants of woodlands and rainforests. All shapes and sizes of ferns thrive here.







CLOCKWISE FROM FAR LEFT Box tolerates sandy or loam soils and sun or part shade. Echinacea tolerates all soils but needs full sun. Salvia needs full sun, but will choke in waterlogged clay soil.

Water

Sure, plants need water, but they need it in the root zone, not on foliage and flowers. If you're establishing a new garden bed, consider installing a drip irrigation system. It delivers water slowly, directly, efficiently and effectively to the roots and you're not lugging a hose around that may become a trip hazard.

Bear in mind that plants have different water needs. Succulents can cope with long periods of dry soil, as they store excess water in their leaves and/or stems. Many Australian natives have also adapted to cope with the poor water-holding capacities of much of our ancient soil. It's the exotic plants of Asia and Europe that need a healthy watering regime.

A quick daily sprinkle doesn't allow water to penetrate deep into the soil, and forces roots to grow near the surface, making plants more likely to topple over. Instead, water deeply and less often. Twice a week for a month for new plants, then monthly to encourage roots to grow deeper into the soil where it's cooler and to give your plants more stability.

WHEN TO WATER

Before you water, poke a chopstick into the soil. If it comes out with crumbs of soil attached, there is still moisture in the soil. If it comes out clean, it's time to water.

Mornings are the best time to water as, after midday, water evaporates before it can soak into the soil. Another advantage is that any water left on the foliage in the morning dries off. That means there are no splashes remaining on leaves which can lead to fungal diseases in plants such as tomatoes, cucumbers or roses.

The second-best time to water is in the evening, but be sure to water the soil, not the leaves.

If your land is sloping, water will run to the lowest level, perhaps creating a bog, while soil at the top remains dry. Consider creating level terraces.

Pot plants need watering more often than plants in a garden because the potting mix allows water to drain away.

Soil

There are three types of soil:

1. SANDY SOIL – This drains water easily but the water also takes vital nutrients with it.

2. CLAY SOIL – This is full of nutrients but it doesn't drain easily, so roots can drown.

3. LOAM SOIL – This is the Goldilocks soil, a mix of sand, clay and silt that's great in gardens.

To determine what type of soil you have, scoop up a small amount, moisten it and try to make a ball in the palm of your hand. If the soil feels gritty and won't stay in a ball, you have sandy soil. If it forms a ball, feels smooth and sticky and can be easily moulded, you have clay. A ball of loam sticks together, feels crumbly but not gritty.

Digging organic matter or compost into both sandy and clay soil types improves their quality.

Get the pH right

Most plants thrive in a soil that has a neutral pH level (6.5–7.5), but some, such as camellias, roses and azaleas, prefer to grow in a slightly acidic soil, while smoke bush, lilac and oleander like a slightly alkaline soil.

You should test the pH level of your soil after you've had tradies around, especially if they've worked with cement. Cement contains limestone, clay and sand and the powder may drift onto your garden soil. Lime, sand and sawdust can affect the structure and pH of your soil, too. See page 88 for pH testing details.

Research Grahame Rowe



Bear in mind the shade cast by a tree and the depth of its roots when planting a flower bed under it. ■

YOUR TIME TO SHINE

If you've got a great tradie that respects your garden, don't forget to tell them to enter our Tradie of the Year competition, sponsored by project management payment portal, Witzer. See page 115 to enter.



TURN SOFT-TISSUE CUTTINGS INTO TEMPORARY WALL ART. «

Double your greenery and cut your plant spend to zero with these simple propagation methods.

Plants *for* free

Words JENNY DILLON *Styling* NONCI NYONI
Photography BOB STEFKO + WILL HORNER

Growing your plants from seeds means you're often in for a surprise in terms of the eventual colour, shape and size of the plants. With propagation, you know exactly what you're getting – a clone of your parent plant. To do it, there are three processes that are ridiculously easy: soft-tissue cuttings (leaf and stem), hard-tissue cuttings (stems), and division. Read on to learn how.



SUCCULENTS ARE THE EASIEST PLANTS TO PROPAGATE FROM LEAF CUTTINGS.

Cuttings in soil

Many houseplants can be grown by cutting off a leaf and laying it on or inserting it into fresh, moist propagation mix (50/50 potting mix and perlite or washed coarse river sand). Place in a container with a drainage hole.



SANSEVIERIA OR SNAKE PLANT

STEP 1 Cut a leaf from the host plant and cut into 7-10cm segments.

STEP 2 Maintain the leaf orientation by marking each segment with an arrow pointing to its lower edge.

STEP 3 Insert the lower edge of each segment (arrow pointing down) about 2.5cm into the mix. Place in bright, indirect light and wait until the mix is nearly dry before watering again thoroughly. You'll see a new pup emerge from the cuttings in one to three months. For faster results divide the plant at the roots (page 72).











AFRICAN VIOLET

STEP 1 Cut a healthy, mature leaf from a host plant.

STEP 2 Dip the stem in rooting hormone to speed up root development.

STEP 3 Plant the stem about 2.5cm deep. Cover pot with a plastic bag and secure with a rubber band. Place pot where it gets six hours of bright, indirect light daily. Water every 3-4 days. Remove bag for a few hours when moisture builds up. When shoots appear at the base of the leaf, remove the bag. Care for the new plant as you do the host plant.

DOUBLING DOWN

Try leaf or stem propagation with these plants.

1 RHIPSALIS
This cactus likes humid conditions.

2 CHALK STICKS
Give this plant plenty of light and heat.

3 SNAKE PLANT
Thriving on neglect, this is a statement plant in any room.

4 MONSTERA
This will grow lush and large from a stem cutting.

5 SILVER INCH PLANT
Grow in bright, indirect light and water sparingly.

6 ECHEVERIA
These also produce pups you can separate from the mother plant and put in propagating mix.

7 PILEA
This looks great in a hanging basket.

8 REX BEGONIA
The king of indoor plants with its fabulous foliage.

9 CRASSULA
This is very hardy and can grow up to 1 metre.

10 PEPEROMIA
These have few roots and are best grown in small pots.




1
2
3
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9
10









ZZ (ZANZIBAR GEM) PLANT

STEP 1 Cut a mature leaf or a young stem with two or three leaves.
STEP 2 Insert into a pot of propagating mix. Place in a warm spot with bright light. Keep mix moist.
STEP 3 The leaf or stem cutting will produce a baby ZZ plant with roots, rhizome, stem and leaves that can be repotted.

SPIDER PLANT

STEP 1 Select a well-developed offshoot, or spiderette, with small starter roots at its base. Cut from the mother plant.
STEP 2 Plant the base of the spiderette in a pot of fresh, moist mix. Keep the mix moist, but not wet, until the plant is established. Spiderettes can be put in water to develop longer roots before potting.









TRY SOME TOUGH LOVE

Hardwood cuttings from roses, hydrangeas or camellias are best done when flowers are finished.

1 ROSES
Cut stems beneath where the flowers were and cut a 10–20cm 'stick' that has 3–5 growth nodes. The cut at the base should be just below a node. Mark base with a down arrow and put this end directly into soil.

2 HYDRANGEAS
Choose healthy, non-flowering shoots 10–15cm long, with two sets of leaves below the top set of leaves. Cut just below the node. Remove lower leaves and put the 'stick' in propagating mix.

3 CAMELLIAS
Make a 10cm cutting in summer, making sure the bottom cut is just below the node. Remove all but two leaves, and place half of the stick into propagating mix.


1
2
3
THE BEST TIME TO TAKE HYDRANGEA CUTTINGS IS IN LATE SUMMER.

Watch cuttings grow in water

Some common houseplants – especially vining types such as pothos, philodendron, and monstera – are easy to propagate by putting stem cuttings in water. After about 5cm of roots form, carefully plant the cutting in fresh, moist mix, taking care not to damage the fine roots.





POTHOS

Pothos cuttings can be placed in a jar of water with a special open-grid lid that holds them in place but lets you easily pull them out once they've formed roots to plant out. Change the water in the jar at least once a week.



MONSTERA

STEP 1 Cut a section of stem with 3–4 leaves, just below a node. Remove lowest leaf and place stem in a container of water, submerging the bottom half of the stem. Replace water every week.
STEP 2 Remove from water after 2.5cm roots emerge.
STEP 3 Plant in fresh, moist propagating mix.







“BE SURE YOUR CUTTING TOOLS ARE SHARP AND CLEAN BEFORE EACH CUT TO PREVENT THE SPREAD OF DISEASES.”

JENNY DILLON, GARDEN EDITOR

SCAN NOW
Scan this QR code to learn more about growing monstera.

Dividing at the roots

Houseplants that sprout new stems, plantlets, or pups around the outside edge of the plant's crown can fill the pot and become crowded over time. Pilea, aloe, peace lily, arrowhead plant and many other varieties can be candidates for root division. Carefully remove the plant from the pot and pull the rooted stems or pups away from each other. You can share these plants with others or keep them in other pots in your own indoor jungle.

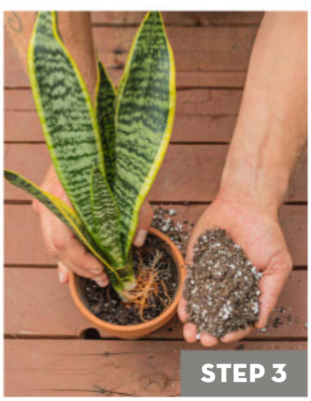


SANSEVIERIA OR SNAKE PLANT

STEP 1 Remove the plant from the pot. Hold the plant at the base of the leaves and gently break into clumps.
STEP 2 Try to keep roots attached to each leaf clump.
STEP 3 Plant clumps in new pots with fresh mix. Water thoroughly. Tall snake plants may need to be staked for a few months until supportive roots develop.



STEP 2



STEP 3



PILEA

STEP 1 Remove the plant from the pot and gently pull plantlets apart from the mother plant. Try to keep the pups' roots intact with the leaves.
STEP 2 Plant the pups in pots of fresh potting soil and replant the mother plant. Water thoroughly. Keep the soil evenly moist, but not overwatered, until plants are established. ■



STEP 1



STEP 2

> "ONLY TAKE CUTTINGS FROM HEALTHY PLANTS."

JENNY DILLON, GARDEN EDITOR

HOOKED-ON POT PLANTS

Crochet up this forever foliage to enjoy plants that last and last.

Love houseplants but have a talent for wilting them? These crochet beauties by Patons can save the day. They stay lush forever, need zero water, and never hold it against you when you go on holiday. There's no soil, no stress, just good looks. Faux real! Instructions start on page 178.



CHAIN OF HEARTS

SANCTUARY POT PLANT HANGER (Pattern in *Patons Big Book of Small Projects – Crochet – Book 1323*)

STRING OF PEARLS

PEACOCK PLANT

FREE PATTERNS
Scan the QR code for more patterns from Patons.



thrifty & thriving

Upcycle op-shop finds into fun and funky homes for indoor plants. Succulents don't need constant TLC or a lot of water, so are a great low-maintenance choice. Here are five fab set-ups to inspire you!

Words CAROLINE MCKENZIE *Photography* JASON DONNELLY *Producer* JENI WRIGHT

1

ON THE FLY

For style that's ready to go the distance, fill plastic containers with cacti and succulent mix, plant them with succulents, and arrange inside a vintage leather suitcase. Hang up old binocular cases and purses, tucking inside smaller plastic cups planted with succulents.



2

CATCH SOME GREENS

Old metal dustpans can clean up nicely! Line the pan pockets with fabric planter pouches filled with cacti mix. That way, you can easily carry your succulents to the sink for a drink (and drain time) on watering day. Use concrete screws to hang the pans on the wall.



GO FOR A MIX OF PLANT HEIGHTS IN EACH PAN.



3

FRESH FLAVOUR

To cook up a planter that's right at home in the kitchen, place miniature potted herbs in an old spice locker. To find something similar to the one here, search Etsy or eBay for 'wooden spice cabinet' or 'apothecary cabinet'.

PLACE INDOOR HERBS BY A SUNNY WINDOW THAT LETS IN DIRECT LIGHT. »

Smart planting

How does your indoor garden grow? Use these quick tips to help your plants thrive.

BABY 'EM FOR A MONTH
You'll be able to tell within the first few weeks if your upcycled planter works well with your plant selection. Take stock weekly during the first month, inspecting for hydration, growth, and pests. If your plants aren't thriving, try moving them to a new location.

CREATE ROOM TO GROW
Make sure your repurposed item has space for your plant's root system. A good rule of thumb: make the hole about 2cm larger in diameter than the plant's original plastic pot.

MATCH LIKE WITH LIKE
Group plants with similar growing requirements together. For example, avoid pairing an aloe vera, which likes bright light and dry soil, with a bird's nest fern, which likes shade and moist soil. Instead, group tropical plants with other tropicals and so on.

REMEMBER TO REPOT
New soil equals new nutrients, so plan to swap out the potting mix of container-bound plants at least twice a year.



4

ABOUT TIME
Wake up a wall using vintage timepieces as houseplant hosts. Some clocks, such as this wooden wall clock, are ready in a minute – just place plastic planters inside. Others require powering up a jigsaw to carve out openings. We cut away sections in the top of both the schoolhouse and desk clocks, for example, to create cavities deep enough to fit a plant pot.

5

STAPLE FARE
Stock up on your greens by filling empty vintage tins with houseplants (opposite). Line the bottoms of the tins with rocks to improve drainage, cover with topsoil, and add plants. We grew a vertical garden with an abundance of tins gathered on an old ladder. Use screws (drilled through the sides of the tins) to secure some of the colourful containers to the ladder. ■



VINTAGE TINS ADD A POP OF COLOUR AND PERSONALITY.

That's a wrap!

You don't need to spend loads on pricey planters. Use this simple technique to turn old pots into eye-catching containers.



ARTISTIC EXPRESSION
You can create wraps with exquisite art paper, wrapping paper, scraps of wallpaper, or other pliable materials. For an earthier look, make wraps using burlap, woven cane or decorative papers made from mango leaf, banana plant, cork and more. You'll find a huge variety of paper available online. Make room for your wrapped pots on shelves that catch the sunlight from a nearby window.

EASY STEPS TO POT WRAPS

Follow these simple steps to wrap a standard 10cm nursery pot. Use larger pieces of cardboard and wrap to fit bigger pots. Just find some paper you like, measure up your pot and go!

Here's how

STEP 1 Cut a piece of corrugated cardboard 10cm wide by 35cm long (or a size to fit your pot). Wrap it around the pot to make a cylinder. Seal the join with masking tape.

STEP 2 Cut a piece of paper 13cm wide by 35cm long (or to fit your pot) and wrap it around the cardboard, extending the paper above its top edge. Seal the join with double-sided tape. Fold the paper over the cylinder edge. Secure with craft glue.

STEP 3 Slide a pot plant into the cylinder. Place a saucer (we used a jar lid) under the pot but inside the cylinder to catch drips. ■









Words & project KATE CARTER FREDERICK *Photography* BRIE PASSANO

COMMUNITY CUBBY

Upcycle a thrifted cabinet into an outdoor street library, swap station or simple donation box.

Words and Project TIFF BANCROFT *Photography* TIM ROBERTS *Styling* NONCI NYONI

Street libraries are a joyful spot to check out on a walk. These outdoor cupboards may have started as a home to swap free books, but some savvy communities use theirs to share home harvests (sometimes there's too many lemons for one house!), seedlings, cuttings or an excess of baked goods.

These community cubbies can help reduce waste, support sustainability, and are an awesome way to foster sharing and social connection with your fellow locals. We created this adorable version by upcycling a thrifted wooden cabinet.



BEFORE

EASY STEPS TO A COMMUNITY SHARING BOX

Gather your supplies

For the cabinet

- Reclaimed wooden cabinet 1220 x 610mm
- 18mm marine plywood (or scrap timber)
- Dulux Weathershield paint in Deep South and Natural White
- Exterior galvanised screws: 15mm, 50mm
- Acrylic sheet or clear sign holder
- Exterior double-sided tape
- Shower caddy
- 6mm copper saddle clips (4)

You'll also need

Circular saw; measuring tape; pencil; combination square; 19mm spade bit; drill; masking tape; clamp; belt sander; Sikabond PVA glue; sandpaper; varnish; paintbrush.

Project notes: When upcycling furniture for outdoors, you'll need to weatherproof it with gap filler, exterior paint and sealant. Use galvanised or stainless steel screws and hinges to resist rust, and attach a pitched roof made from exterior timber to allow rain run-off.

CREATE A PITCHED ROOF

Here's how

STEP 1 For the roof sides, measure the depth of your cabinet. Mark a rectangle on plywood with a pencil and combination square (the depth of the cabinet by one-third the depth of cabinet). Draw a diagonal line to connect the corners. Use a circular saw or handsaw to cut the rectangle, then a handsaw to cut along the diagonal to create two identical triangles.

STEP 2 For the roof front, measure the width of the cabinet and subtract the thickness of the roof sides. The height is the same as the roof sides. Mark a rectangle on the plywood and cut out with a circular saw.

STEP 3 Apply PVA glue along the short ends of the roof front and attach to the short ends of the triangles with a butt joint. Use a countersink drill bit to drill two equally spaced holes through the roof sides and into the roof front. Insert and tighten 50mm screws. Repeat for the other side.

STEP 4 Measure and cut out a rooftop for the cabinet. Oversize the top by 20-40mm on all sides. Apply PVA to the top edges of the roof sides and front, and attach rooftop. Predrill six equally spaced countersink holes through the rooftop into the sides and front. Insert screws.



STEP 1



STEP 3



FOSTER CONNECTION WITH YOUR NEIGHBOURS WHILE REDUCING WASTE.





WATERPROOFING THE CABINET

STEP 5 Lay cabinet onto its side then use a handsaw to cut off the legs flush to the cabinet base.
STEP 6 Remove the door from the cabinet, then remove the hinges and handle. With a jigsaw, cut out the centre of the door panel.
STEP 7 Apply gap filler to any gaps, screw holes or cabinet joints to make the cabinet watertight. Allow to dry.
STEP 8 With a roller, paintbrush and tray, apply primer to all the cabinet surfaces (inside, outside and the door). Allow to dry.
STEP 9 Apply two coats of exterior paint to all the cabinet surfaces. Use a contrasting paint colour for the roof and door. Allow to dry after each coat.



RACK HACK Offering up a handy rack to stack seedlings and cuttings will attract all the green thumbs in the street. A home harvest rack lined with coconut fibre will help keep vegies fresher for longer, too. So go ahead and share those apples in abundance! This shower caddy, available from Kmart or Target, won't rust and works a treat for $10 – hang it up with small saddle clips.

Gather your supplies

For the mounting post

- 88 x 88mm 1.8m treated pine post
- 90 x 45mm 2.4m H3 framing pine
- 60mm 14g galvanised bugle screws (8)
- 250 x 180mm scrap marine plywood
- Quick set concrete (2 bags)

You'll also need

Post hole digger; scrap timber stakes; hose.

MOUNTING POST

STEP 10 To create a post stand that stands 900mm from the ground, measure and cut a treated pine post 1500mm in length. Measure and cut two mitred corner brackets with 90 x 45mm framing pine.
To fix the brackets onto the post, position in the centre and flush to the top of the post. Predrill two equally spaced holes through the brackets and into the post. Insert bugle screws and tighten with the drill.
STEP 11 For a post base, cut marine plywood big enough to support the cabinet. Drill four mounting holes, 20mm from all corners. Ours was 360mm wide (the same width as the cabinet) and 180mm deep. To attach corner brackets to the post base, repeat the method in Step 10 with two bugle screws on each side.
STEP 12 Attach the base and post to the bottom of the cabinet using bugle screws.
STEP 13 To install the post, use a post hole digger to dig a 600mm hole. Insert post with mounted cabinet. Pour dry concrete into the hole around the post. Add water and mix with a stake. Use a level to ensure the cabinet is plumb and level. Support with stakes until set.



CUSTOMISING YOUR CABINET

No glass door? No problem! Just use a jigsaw to cut out the centre of the door, then attach acrylic (or an insert from an old picture frame) for a window. We used a sign holder from Officeworks and cut it to size. Use exterior double-sided tape to attach to the inside of the cupboard door.

Get creative with your library and customise your storage set-up to suit what you want to share in your hood. If you're in a high-rise metro zone, you might not get many vegies, but maybe your next door neighbour makes more chutney than they know what to do with!

No shelf? Make one! Measure the internal width of your cabinet, then cut scrap timber to size. Support with small brackets or screw into the shelf ends from the side of the cabinet. Try out the best height to mount the shelf with different books. (You want to be able to pass on the odd oversized autobiography.)



ORDER UP

A homemade sign could entice home bakers to share their wares with your street library. Encourage items that won't spoil at room temperature, such as Anzac bickies or homemade jam.

Paint a chalkboard label on the library so you can change up the stock with what works and what's in season. Chat to the locals and put the word out. The more engagement you get, the more your neighbours can help keep your sharing spot full of surprises. ■

FOR SHOPPING DETAILS AND PROJECT SUPPLIES, SEE P192.

JOIN THE LIBRARY

Street Library Australia is a not-for-profit organisation whose primary mission is to encourage literacy and community. It has heaps of resources about how you can get involved in the street library movement. You can build a library from scratch from the free plans or buy a ready-made library and post. There are great tips on how to be a 'street librarian', too. Scan the QR code to find out more.



SCAEVOLA, ALSO CALLED FAN FLOWER.

Take it *to the* verge

Nature knows no boundaries, so take it beyond your fence to the street.

The nature strips outside your home or apartment block are designed to lift the look of your neighbourhood and soften the environmental impact of the hard road and path surfaces. When you plant out your verge with pretty, low-growing, shallow-rooted plants, you do more than brighten your street. You also provide habitat and food for the insects and birds that visit your neighbourhood.

Photography ALAN JENSEN *Project* TIFF BANCROFT



Put nature back into your nature strip with colourful, low-growing plants. Make it attractive enough and you may find the rest of the neighbourhood will get in on the act.

Before you get started

Nature strips are owned by your local council. If you want to replace the grass with a garden, you need to get permission from your council first.

There are some restrictions to help keep everyone safe.
- No spiky, prickly or poisonous plants allowed.
- Leave room for people to get out of their cars and access the footpath.
- Don't block access to rubbish and recycling bins.
- Don't put in tall shrubs that could block a driver's view of the traffic.
- Don't have sharp or raised objects – rocks or edging – that can be a trip hazard.
- Don't damage or remove street trees – they belong to the council.
- Check for pipes and cables before you start. Go to Before You Dig Australia at **byda.com.au** or use the BYDA app from Google Play or the App Store.













On the job

Trees and power or light poles are magnets for dogs sniffing out and cancelling the scents of other pooches. Their activities have the potential to make the soil very acidic, which can kill many plants. Test the soil before you plant anything! A simple kit can reveal the level of your soil's pH in minutes.

STEP 1 Remove all weeds, stones and debris.
STEP 2 Take a small sample of the soil and test the pH following the instructions on the soil tester kit. If the soil is alkaline, sprinkle with ammonia sulphate. If it's acidic, sprinkle with lime. Water in well. You can get both ammonia sulphate and lime at a nursery or hardware store.
STEP 3 Turn the soil to aerate it, and dig in organic matter at the same time to enrich the soil.
STEP 4 Dig holes for the plants. Water the holes and allow water to drain.
STEP 5 Put plants in holes and backfill with soil.
STEP 6 Water well.
STEP 7 Cover soil with mulch.

SCAN ME
Scan the QR code to shop your Manutec soil pH testing kit.



YELLOW BUTTONS (*CHRYSOCEPHALUM* SP)



CONVOLVULUS

Design ideas

• **Choose hardy, low-growing plants**, preferably perennials, so you don't have bare patches in winter where weeds will thrive.

• **Succulents suit sandy soils** and can be planted in a way that creates a dynamic mosaic.

• **Complement native trees that council has planted** by choosing colourful, low-growing natives for the verge.

• **For sunny spots, try natives such as scaevola,** creeping boobialla (*Myoporum* sp), cut-leaf daisy, yellow buttons (*Chrysocephalum* sp) and hardenbergia.

• **In shady spots, grow native violets** as a ground cover.

• **Plant a daisy strip with seasonal flowers.** Euryops and marguerites flower year-round in temperate climates. Also try African daisies and osteospermums (spring to autumn), gaillardias and shasta daisies (summer), echinacea (summer to autumn) and asters (autumn).

• **Create a fern patch if you're on the shady side** of the street and have long shadows from buildings.

• **Leave access paths in your verge garden** so people getting out of cars can reach the footpath. Lay these paths with bark mulch that will also help suppress weeds.

• **Increase your plant stock with cuttings.** Use leaf cuttings to propagate succulents and stem cuttings for natives and daisies. See our propagation story on page 64. ■



LOMANDRA

TRASH OR TREASURE

You can snatch a steal buying plants at local markets, from discount bins, picking up at council collection or even online – here's how to ensure you're getting real value for money.

Words JENNY DILLON

Buying plants from various discounted or second-hand offers is a great way to save money, especially when you're buying from small sellers that use local markets or online platforms such as Facebook Marketplace, as they don't have the overheads of larger outlets. But how can you be sure you're getting the plant you want and that it's healthy? Here's a list of questions to ask before you hand over your money.

DRIVE A BARGAIN

Drive the price down by inspecting the plant and asking for a discount when you spot problems.

Here are some top tips to discern if it will be a bloomer or a bust.

• Roots crawling out of drainage holes.
The plant may be root bound, which occurs when shrubs are grown in pots for several years. This reduces the plant's access to water, air and nutrients and makes it susceptible to pests, diseases and death. You can save it by immediately repotting or planting it out after the roots have been teased out and trimmed. Great buy!

• Yellowing leaves.
Feel the growing medium. If it's very moist, the plant's overwatered and roots are struggling for air. But it's still a yes. Take it home, remove the yellow leaves, repot and monitor watering.

• Plant and pot feels heavier than it should be.
The growing medium may be garden soil. You can replace it with potting mix, but you have no idea where the soil came from or if it contains pathogens or weed seeds. Give it a miss.

• Signs of pests, such as aphids, scale or mealy bugs.
These sap suckers can be shy and hide on the underside of leaves. It's a sign the plant is weak from not enough – or too much – water, food and light. It's still salvageable! See our DIY herbicides and pesticides tips on page 160 and revive it by growing it in the environment it needs.



BE REALISTIC

You see a large, healthy, blooming tree for $15 online. But is this the plant you're going to get?

Here's what to ask the seller:

• How old and tall is the plant?



• How often has the plant been repotted?
• Shipping plants taller than one metre can be expensive. Some companies are absolute pros at delivering their plants, and this can usually be discerned by checking their shipping page for information on the process, and checking Google reviews of the site you're buying from.

Photography Adobe Stock



HOME SAFE

When your bargain plant is delivered, or you bring it home from pick-up, it can experience some trauma and start to look sad. Follow these steps for a seamless integration into your home or garden.

STEP 1 Put the plant in a sink or tub and gently run water through the potting mix until it drains from the bottom of the pot.

STEP 2 Place your plant in the appropriate light conditions. You should see a perky response within a day.

If the plant continues to look miserable, gently tip out the potting mix and inspect the roots. If they're brown, soft and mushy and smell off, the plant is unlikely to recover. If they are creamy or light brown and feel firm, repot and give it water, food, sunlight and lots of love.

IS IT LEGAL TO TRADE?

Australia has strict quarantine laws not only for plants being brought in from overseas, but also being sent interstate. Commercial online plant shops advise they don't ship plant goods to Tasmania, the Northern Territory or Western Australia unless they provide biosecurity certificates declaring the goods are free of pests, diseases and weeds.

Plant goods include fruit, vegetables, nursery stock, flowers, plants, seeds and soil. Sometimes, smaller operators or second-hand sellers don't include this advice and, if you have shipped a plant illegally and get caught, you (the importer) and the seller (the exporter) can be fined.

Be careful, some plants should not be traded at all, anywhere. Some of the 32 weeds of national significance declared under the Biosecurity Act are found for sale because they grow in the wild, are easily propagated and look pretty!

So, check before you buy – search '[plant name] weed' to learn the plant's status and go to **interstatequarantine.org.au** for information. ■



Pick & mix

Furniture doesn't always have to be part of a set. In fact, a bit of variety can add wonderful style to your home.

Words NONCI NYONI

Photography David Tsay



If you prefer taking your time finding pieces that you love, rather than decorating in one fell swoop, then this article is for you. Gathering items over time lets you truly bring your personality to a space. It can also be cost-effective as you feel more free to pounce on budget-friendly finds at second-hand stores and online. So press pause on 'matchy-matchy' and use these tips to confidently mix colours and styles.

TIE IT TOGETHER

If you're going for a maximalist look, find some connecting threads to tie it together. This living area may seem like a vivid pot-pourri, but there's a thoughtful narrative at work. The velvet sofa and armchairs repeat the block colours in the artworks, but essentially riff on a classic combination of gold and blue. The armchairs and coffee table share similar curves. The intense Yves Klein blue of the armchair is a standout, echoed in vases and on the striped cushions. The effect is opulent yet inviting.



Photography Robert Peterson

PLAY WITH PATTERNS

There's a skill to mixing patterns. Start by choosing a dominant pattern that has a larger scale, then layer in smaller patterns in similar hues. Finally, add a pinch of contrast. This sitting area mixes pieces of vastly different styles. The geometric print on the couch delivers the main colour cues, repeated in the patterned cushions on the window seat. The Regency-style armchair with leopard print provides a contrast. The rug repeats the spots in a similar grey to the marble in the coffee table. It's harmonious and no one item overpowers the room.



Photography Jay Wilde

TRY TEXTURAL CONTRASTS

In this room it's texture, not colour, that's the hero, with tones in the same palette bringing together the different elements. Whitewashed timber beams, timber panelling and a river rock fireplace have a pioneer vibe, but the rug and furnishings are marvellously modern. The neutral tones make it a harmonious whole, matching the rustic textures with a Pernilla lounge chair and ottoman designed by Bruno Mathsson. Floorboards are laid in the opposite direction to the wall panelling, making the room look wider.



CHOOSE HERO COLOURS

You can use a favourite artwork or furnishing to inspire a design scheme. Here, an eye-catching red print gives instant panache to a little breakfast nook. Bench seats are in the same cabinetry as the kitchen cupboards, with cushions in green and blue that contrast with the artwork, and some in red that match it. The dining chair is in a similar tone to the light oak of the picture frame. The metallic gold finish of the pendant light and dining table base add a little glamour to the set-up. It's a perfectly balanced mix and match space.



Photography Brie Williams

NEUTRALS CROSS ERAS

Even wild mixes of shapes can go together when you keep your furnishings and homewares to the same colours. All the seating in this dining room is built on a beautiful neutral palette that suits the strong and sturdy timber dining table. It looks cohesive, even with the contrast of the Eero Saarinen-style swivel chair and sleek Verner Panton stacking chair with the provincial-style bench. There's also a great mix of textures with the timber, fabric and smooth finishes of the chairs contrasting with the raw metal pendant lightshade and wall art.



Photography David Tsay

MIX WITH INTENTION

This vibrant medley of cockatoo-studded wallpaper, striped cushions and colour works because the bold pattern on the walls is balanced with other furnishings in solid colours. A banquette-style sofa draws the eye with its sweep of deep rose fabric, contrasting with the teal wallpaper. The fluffy ottoman and US-made dining table are both personality pieces that chime with the botanical theme. Other furnishings are in cane and rattan. Each item could stand on its own, but combined they make a creative and energetic space.



Photography Jay Wilde

MATERIAL BASE

Mix and match works beautifully in this dining room because the common thread is the timber in the chairs and refectory dining table. The clutch of chairs in different styles has a casual character but the setting still looks cohesive. The mood here is modern farmhouse, with plain sunlit walls and an airy feel. A whitewashed dresser and plain rug add texture. The bold balloon shade and antique copper on the wall (part of an original bed warmer pan) bring the gleam of old metal. And the flourish of hydrangeas on the table? They're right on trend! ■



CLARISSA'S MUM'S SINGAPORE NOODLES

Recipe on page 104

Value tip

Making your own marinade is an easy, low-cost way to add flavour to stir-fries.

COOKING WITH COLIN & CLARISSA

Raid the fridge to whip up these totally delish dinners!

Photography TIM ROBERTS *Styling* MICHELE CRANSTON



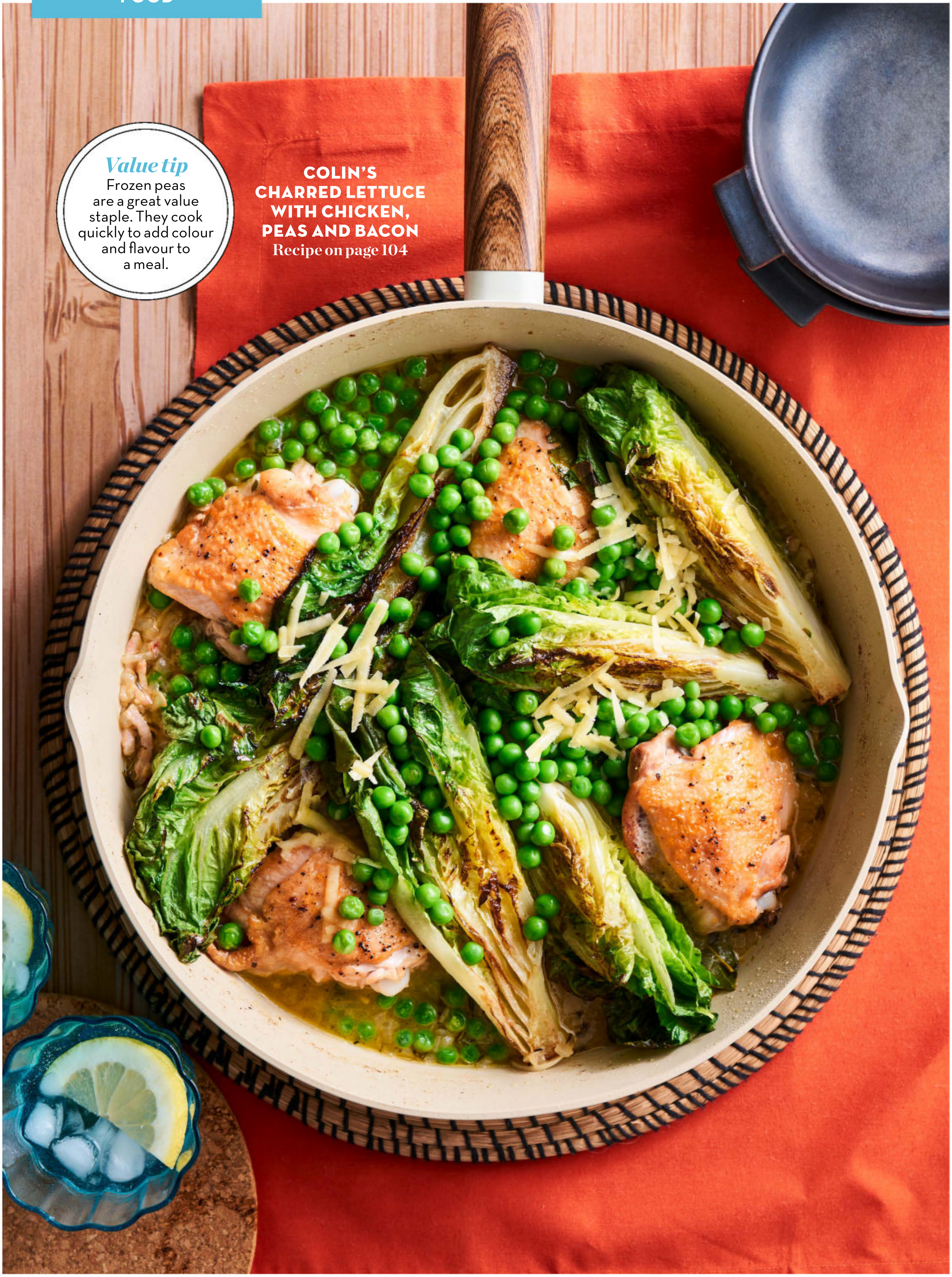
SEEN ON BHG TV
FRIDAYS 7.00

CLARISSA'S CHINESE-STYLE STEAMED SNAPPER

Recipe on page 104

Value tip
Any type of Asian green goes well with steamed snapper. Simply pick the best value at the supermarket.

COLIN FASSNIDGE AND CLARISSA FEILDEL
Join us as we show you how to make delicious dishes on *BHG* TV, Fridays at 7pm on Channel 7.
(Apologies, may be subject to change.)
For more recipes, go to **BHG.COM.AU**



Value tip

Frozen peas are a great value staple. They cook quickly to add colour and flavour to a meal.

COLIN'S CHARRED LETTUCE WITH CHICKEN, PEAS AND BACON

Recipe on page 104



Value tip
Use up whatever green vegetables you have in this dish, so nothing goes to waste.

COLIN'S 'WHAT'S IN THE BOTTOM OF THE FRIDGE' PASTA

Recipe on page 106



CLARISSA'S MUM'S SINGAPORE NOODLES

Preparation time 15 mins plus 30 mins soaking
Cooking time 15 mins
Serves 4

250g pork fillet, thinly sliced
250g rice vermicelli noodles
6 large dried shiitake mushrooms
½ cup peanut oil
1 brown onion, thinly sliced
3 cloves garlic, finely chopped
Sea-salt flakes and ground white pepper, to season
1 large carrot, julienned
12 green prawns, shelled and deveined, leaving tails intact
1 bunch garlic chives, cut into 4cm lengths
200g bean sprouts, rinsed
Sliced medium red chilli, lemon juice and extra soy sauce, to serve

MARINADE

1 Tbsp oyster sauce
2 Tbsp soy sauce
1 tsp sesame oil
1 tsp ground white pepper
1 tsp sugar
1 tsp cornflour

EGG PANCAKES

5 eggs

STEP 1 For the marinade, combine ingredients in a medium bowl. Add pork and toss to coat. Set aside.
STEP 2 Place noodles in a large bowl and cover with cold water. Soak for 30 minutes, until softened. Drain. Using scissors, cut the noodles a couple of times to make shorter lengths.
STEP 3 Place mushrooms in a small bowl and cover with hot water. Soak 20–30 minutes, until hydrated. Reserve liquid. Discard stems (see Cook's Tip) and finely slice mushrooms.
STEP 4 To make the egg pancakes, whisk eggs in a bowl. Season. Heat a non-stick frying pan on low heat. Add a very small amount of oil (it does not need to cover the base of the pan). Using a ladle, pour a third of the egg mixture into the pan, swirling to coat the base. Use the oil and remaining egg mixture to make two more pancakes. Roll up pancakes and slice in thin strips.
STEP 5 Heat remaining oil in a large wok on high heat until slightly smoking. Add onion. Stir-fry until slightly golden. Add garlic and pork mixture and stir-fry for 2 minutes. Season.
STEP 6 Add carrot, mushrooms and prawns. Stir-fry 2 minutes. Add the reserved mushroom liquid and noodles. Toss gently until hot. Add extra water if needed. Stir through chives and bean sprouts. Remove from heat. Check seasoning.
STEP 7 Transfer noodles to a plate and top with sliced egg pancake. Serve with chilli, lemon juice and soy sauce.

COOK'S TIP
If you soak the dried mushrooms for 24 hours you can also use the stems.



CLARISSA'S CHINESE-STYLE STEAMED SNAPPER

Preparation time 20 mins
Cooking time 25 mins
Serves 4

1.2–1.5kg whole snapper, cleaned and scaled
1 Tbsp sesame oil
Salt and ground white pepper
10cm piece fresh ginger
6 green onions
Coriander leaves, sliced red chilli, steamed rice, stir-fried vegetables, to serve

SAUCE

⅔ cup light soy sauce
2 Tbsp sugar
1 Tbsp sesame oil
3-4 Tbsp vegetable oil

STEP 1 Rinse the snapper and pat it dry with paper towels. Make a few diagonal slits on each side of the fish to help it cook evenly. Brush sesame oil over both sides of the fish and season with salt and pepper (including the cavity).
STEP 2 To steam the fish, line a plate with baking paper. This will prevent the skin from sticking. Place fish on plate, fill the cavity with six slices of ginger and half the onions, halved. Cut remaining onions into batons and slice into thin strips (julienne). Immerse in ice-cold water. Julienne remaining ginger and scatter over fish.
STEP 3 Bring water to the boil in a large wok or pan. Top with a steamer. Add plated fish, cover with a lid, and steam over medium to high heat for 20–25 minutes. The fish is cooked when its flesh flakes easily with a fork.
STEP 4 Meanwhile, for the sauce, heat the soy sauce, sugar and sesame oil in a small saucepan on medium heat until the sugar melts (do not boil).
STEP 5 Heat vegetable oil in a small saucepan over a high heat until hot but not smoking. Remove fish from steamer to a serving plate, discarding the cooking liquid. Scatter with remaining onions, ginger, coriander and chilli. Drizzle with sauce. Pour over the hot vegetable oil immediately.
STEP 6 Serve with steamed rice and stir-fried vegetables.



COLIN'S CHARRED LETTUCE WITH CHICKEN, PEAS AND BACON

Preparation time 10 mins
Cooking time 25 mins
Serves 6

2 Tbsp olive oil
2 baby cos lettuce, cut into wedges
4 chicken thigh cutlets, skin on
2 onions, chopped
4 cloves garlic, finely sliced
100g bacon rashers, rind removed, thinly sliced



COLIN'S PEACH AND PECAN PIE TOPPER

Recipe on page 106

Value tip

Leftover pecans can be frozen in an airtight container to extend their shelf life.

½ bunch fresh thyme, leaves picked
100g butter
1 cup water
2 bay leaves
1 cup frozen peas
Finely grated zest and juice 1 lemon
Finely grated parmesan, to serve

STEP 1 Heat the oil in a large, deep frying pan on high heat. Add the lettuce and cook until golden on one side. Transfer to a plate.
STEP 2 Add chicken, skin-side down, to the same pan. Cook for 3 minutes or until golden. Transfer to a plate. Add onion, garlic, bacon and thyme to the pan. Cook, stirring, for 3–4 minutes, until onion is tender.
STEP 3 Return chicken to pan with butter, water and bay leaves. Cover and simmer for 10–15 minutes or until cooked. Season.
STEP 4 Scatter with peas and add lemon zest and juice. Arrange lettuce wedges over chicken in pan. Cover and simmer for a further 2 minutes. Sprinkle with parmesan and serve.



COLIN'S 'WHAT'S IN THE BOTTOM OF THE FRIDGE' PASTA

Preparation time 10 mins
Cooking time 10 mins
Serves 4–6

1 bunch broccolini, roughly chopped
4 kale or silverbeet leaves, roughly chopped
2 stalks celery, roughly chopped
2 cups baby spinach or rocket
2 cloves garlic
100g parmesan or other hard cheese (pecorino or manchego will also work well), coarsely grated
½ cup roasted almonds, chopped
½ cup olive oil, plus extra
Juice of 1 lemon
Sea-salt flakes and cracked black pepper, to taste
500g packet linguine
Fresh basil, tarragon or flat-leaf parsley, to garnish
Goat's cheese or extra grated parmesan, to serve

STEP 1 Bring a large pot of salted water to the boil. Add broccolini, kale, celery and spinach. Cook for 30 seconds. Drain and immerse in ice water until cool. Drain again, then squeeze dry.
STEP 2 Place greens, garlic, parmesan, half the almonds and ½ cup olive oil in a blender. Blend, adding more oil as needed, until smooth. Add lemon juice and season.
STEP 3 Cook pasta following packet directions. Drain. Add enough sauce to hot pasta to coat. Toss well.
STEP 5 Divide pasta among bowls and garnish with herbs and goat's cheese or parmesan.

COOK'S TIP

This sauce is just as tasty served with roast meats and vegetables. You can store the sauce in the fridge for two or three days.



COLIN'S PEACH AND PECAN PIE TOPPER

Preparation time 20 mins plus cooling time
Cooking time 1 hour
Serves 6

300g jar orange marmalade
2 Tbsp water
100g butter, softened
125g punnet raspberries
2 star anise
2 cinnamon sticks
1 vanilla pod, scraped
2 bay leaves
Juice of 1 lemon
Pinch of salt
7 medium whole peaches
1 cup roasted pecans, chopped, plus extra to serve
2 sheets frozen puff pastry (or 375g roll puff pastry), just thawed
2 free-range egg yolks, lightly beaten
Raw sugar, for sprinkling
Crème fraîche, to serve

STEP 1 Preheat oven to 220°C/200°C fan-forced.
STEP 2 In a medium saucepan, melt marmalade and water over low heat. Increase heat to medium. Whisk in butter until incorporated. Whisking continuously, add raspberries, star anise, cinnamon, vanilla and bay leaves. Simmer 5–10 minutes or until slightly thickened. Stir in lemon juice and season with salt.
STEP 3 Place one peach in the centre of a 25cm diameter and 5cm deep round ceramic baking dish. Surround it with the remaining peaches so they fit snugly. Pour over the marmalade mixture, reserving any extra mixture for serving. Set aside to cool, then scatter with pecans.
STEP 4 If using two pastry sheets, gently press two edges together to create a large sheet. Top the peach mixture carefully with the pastry, then using the back of a spoon or your cold fingers, tuck the pastry inside the pan's sides, around the peaches. Brush the pastry with beaten egg and sprinkle with sugar. Sprinkle with extra chopped pecan, if you like.
STEP 5 Place the baking dish or pan on an oven tray. Cook for 35–45 minutes or until the pastry is crisp and golden and the peaches are tender when pierced with a knife. Remove from the oven and leave to stand for 10 minutes.
STEP 6 Serve with crème fraîche and any remaining sauce.

COOK'S TIPS

• If you're using small peaches, you may need more than seven to fill up the baking dish.
• You can cover the pastry loosely with foil after 30 minutes if it looks like it's browning too fast. ■

Food preparation Mel Burge

Magnificent moulding



DADO DIMENSION
White wainscoting stretches up to a dado rail and is topped with navy.



A room of flat plain walls can feel boxy, no matter the size. You can use wall moulding to bring soul to the room and give it an architecturally designed vibe without breaking the bank! Get across the basics first, then borrow these ideas to make your walls go wow.

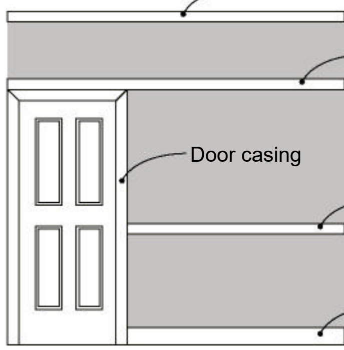
Words TIFF BANCROFT



WINDOW BOX
Picture frame or box moulding is easy to install and amps up a room in a flash. Here, a frame between the windows draws the eye.

The basics

Horizontal mouldings including skirting boards, dado and picture rails are commonly used in homes. Picture rails make the ceiling appear higher and 'grander' while dado rails can add balance to your room. Choosing either is a good place to start when you want to give walls a budget-friendly glow-up.



DADO AND PICTURE RAILS

A dado or picture rail can be an easy DIY project using off-the-shelf trim available at $5–$10 per metre.

Attach a picture rail 30–50cm down from the ceiling, depending on the height of the room. For a dado, attach it a third of the way up from the floor for the standard 'chair rail' height. For a professional look, use construction adhesive and a nail gun to attach the moulding to the wall.

Tools for the job: Don't forget your tape measure, level, mitre block and saw, as well as your nail gun.



OFF THE RAILS
Add elegance with box moulding capped with a dado rail.



Fancier finishes using moulding

Looking for more luxe from your moulding project? Various styles can be achieved according to your preferred style, budget, skillset, tools and the time you have available. Read on to discover four easy ways to elevate your space, (including one cheat method!), as well as our pros and cons for each. Use these ideas to add designer chic, and choose what's right for you!



GET INTO THE GROOVE Create a textured look on your walls with VJ boards or panels.

1 VJ PANEL MOULDINGS

VJ stands for vertical joints (also called tongue and groove). Traditionally, it was made from hardwood boards that slotted together to form equally spaced vertical joints. It's now also available in large panels made from MDF for easy installation. VJ panels help protect walls from knocks and scuffs, so are useful in high-traffic hallways. The vertical lines also make rooms appear taller and more spacious. The popularity of VJ boards has grown in recent years, and there are ways to create this coastal look without paying for hardwood timber and a chippy.

VJ MDF (FIBREBOARD) PANELS

These come pre-primed and sell for \$30–\$40 a metre for 900 x 1200mm.

PROS

- Looks like the original.
- Comes pre-primed.
- Great to cover up uneven walls.
- Comes with comprehensive instructions and is long lasting.
- Easy to paint.

CONS

- Some woodworking skills and a circular saw are needed to cut panels to size and around electrical outlets.
- It can become expensive if you're boarding out a whole wall or room.

VJ PEEL AND STICK PANELS

Peel and stick panels are quick and cost effective. A five pack of 700 x 700mm panels is just \$20 (under \$6 per metre).

PROS

- Application is peel and stick.
- There's no need for power tools.
- It is super affordable.
- Panels are easy to paint.

CONS

- Walls must be flat and primed.
- Careful application is required to hide the joins.
- Can't be fixed to all wall surfaces.
- Only works for small areas.



RAISE THE ROOF
Make your ceiling appear higher by painting the top quarter of the wall the same colour as the ceiling.

2 BOX FRAME WALL MOULDING

Pretty as a picture, this type of moulding gives your walls an instant facelift. Choose from a large range of moulding profiles available off the shelf at your local timber supplier. Go minimal with a square edged profile to mimic a batten-board style or choose a detailed profile for a traditional look.

PROS

- Easy to measure and cut.
- Cheap and easy to install.

CONS

- Some tools are required, such as for cutting the mitred ends.
- It takes time to plan the shape and size of the moulding.

Here's how

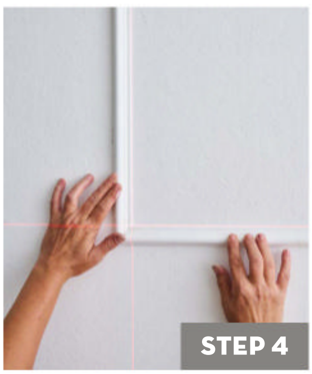
STEP 1 Work out how much timber moulding you need, then draw up a shopping and cutting list. We used 30 x 12mm pine panel architrave.
STEP 2 Carefully measure the moulding, then use a mitre box and hand saw to cut components with 45-degree mitred ends.
STEP 3 to make a frame, glue components together with quick-setting glue and allow to dry.
STEP 4 Apply a thin bead of construction adhesive to the back of the frame, then press in place on the wall.
STEP 5 Apply a bead of gap filler around the joints and smooth.
STEP 6 Once dry, your moulding and wall is ready to paint.

TIP For a renter-friendly option, use mounting tape on the back of the moulding. Apply painter's tape to the wall and attach moulding onto the tape.











FOR PROJECT SUPPLIES, SEE STOCKISTS ON P192.

3 BATTEN BOARD PANELLING

Batten board panelling creates a smart look on a budget. This style is created with sheets of MDF or plywood and is secured to the wall to achieve a flat, smooth finish. Vertical (and sometimes horizontal) battens are then attached to the board and equally spaced to cover the seams. The look can be floor to ceiling for a cool modern style or finished with a top and bottom horizontal trim for a farmhouse flavour.

PROS

- You can skip the MDF or plywood sheets and get the same look using just battens if your walls are flat.
- It's excellent for a feature wall.
- Easy to use off-the-shelf batten panels are readily available.

CONS

- You'll need a track/table saw to cut MDF battens.
- Accurate planning needed to cover joins.
- You may need to remove skirtings or the dado to cut around electrical points.



CHECK THE BOX
For a feature wall, go bold with batten board panelling painted in a contrasting colour.



SHORTCUT
Want that moulding look for less effort? Wallpaper moulding is an easy dupe.

Photography Tim Roberts; styling Nonci Nyoni

TIPS FOR SUCCESS

• Measure your wall and plan out your design on paper before you start your project.
• Mark up the placements on the wall before you attach moulding or wallpaper. Use a level and straight edge for accuracy (a laser level here works a treat).
• If you're unsure about placement for the moulding, mock up the design on your wall with painter's tape before you get out the glue and nails.
• If your end goal feels like too much for one project, start with a dado rail. Paint the same colour on the dado, the skirting and the wall in between. Later, you can attach moulding or extra details and simply touch up the paint.
• Your local hardware store will cut timber sheets to size. Take your cutting list when you buy your timber supplies. ■

4 WALLPAPER MOULDING

Want an even easier option? Grab a roll of blown vinyl wallpaper! We used Anaglypta Edwardian Panel at $53 for 10m x 530mm from Amazon.

Here's how

STEP 1 Draw a straight vertical line on the wall as a guide for your first strip of wallpaper. (Use a level or a plumb line.)
STEP 2 Cut paper to required length, then wipe back with a damp sponge.
STEP 3 Gently fold (without creasing) the ends inwards and set aside while you paste the wall.
STEP 4 Attach the wallpaper strip along the marked line and smooth it out to ensure there's no wrinkles. Use a seam roller for the edges. Wipe away any excess paste with a damp cloth.
STEP 5 Note the pattern repeat and cut your second strip accordingly. Repeat the process, lining up the wallpaper pattern edges.

PROS

• Blown vinyl wallpaper is fast to put up and affordable.
• The clean-up is relatively easy.
• It is less likely to damage walls.
• No filling is required around the edges.
• There's minimal prep on flat walls.
• It requires few tools.
• Leftover paper can be used to cover the back of a cabinet or bookcase.

CONS

• It's not great on uneven walls.
• It doesn't look as authentic as wood.
• The paper can be hard to remove.



Anaglypta Edwardian Panel wallpaper.

Vote for your favourite tradie

These DIY wall features can add pizzazz to your home, but why not sit back and watch a talented tradie do all the work for you? Know someone skilled? Nominate them for our Tradie of the Year awards, sponsored by the payment portal that's making renovations a breeze – Witzer.
See opposite page for details.

From barren to bountiful WITH CHARLIE



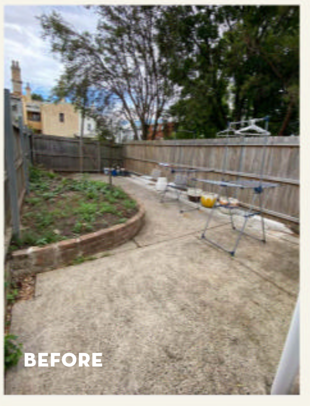


Large garden pots can be expensive, so look for bargains at garage sales or snap up seconds and clearance stock online. Plant them with a range of herbs, ornamentals and a statement lemon tree.

Rather than dig up a concrete slab, build on top of it for a vibrant, verdant getaway!

Words JENNY DILLON & TIFF BANCROFT
Photography ALAN JENSEN

Life in a concrete jungle – a cracked and weed-filled one, to boot – can be tough. And when it's small and narrow (9 x 4 metres), it's time to unleash your imagination. These affordable ideas will help you create new spaces – yes, plural! – where you can cook, entertain or just relax in your new outdoor sanctuary.



BEFORE



CHARLIE ALBONE
Join me as I transform this bare backyard on *BHG* TV, Friday, March 21 at 7pm on Channel 7.
(Apologies, may be subject to change.)
For more garden tips, go to
WWW.BHG.COM.AU

Recycled bricks are less expensive than new ones and have more character. They're also environmentally friendly since they don't go to landfill and save energy by avoiding making new bricks.



Turn small into spacious

• Determine what you'll be doing in a particular area. When space is tight, convenience is important – place your barbecue close to the kitchen, and your relaxation corner away from any street noise.

• Define spaces and create the illusion of more room by having different levels and using a variety of materials, such as a wooden deck and recycled bricks.

• If you're using tiles, choose ones that are large, smooth and pale so your small space doesn't look too busy.

• Think about where to store gardening tools and other items in winter – space under a bench is handy.

• Use colour thoughtfully as a small space needs harmony. Keep bold colours to smaller items – a fruiting lemon tree, small pots for plants or candle holders – to add visual depth.





ABOVE Job done, Charlie relaxes in comfort on the floating bench on raised garden beds. **RIGHT** Slim, light-coloured garden furniture doesn't overwhelm the small space. **CENTRE** Try box in a pot! Box (*Buxus* spp) is easily trimmed to keep it compact. **FAR RIGHT** A polished timber stump can serve as an extra stool, a place to put your coffee cup, or be an unobtrusive piece of garden art. **OPPOSITE TOP** A garden can be verdant in summer, but imagine what it may look like in winter, when annual herbs and summer vegies have disappeared. Put in evergreen plants to avoid too many bare patches.





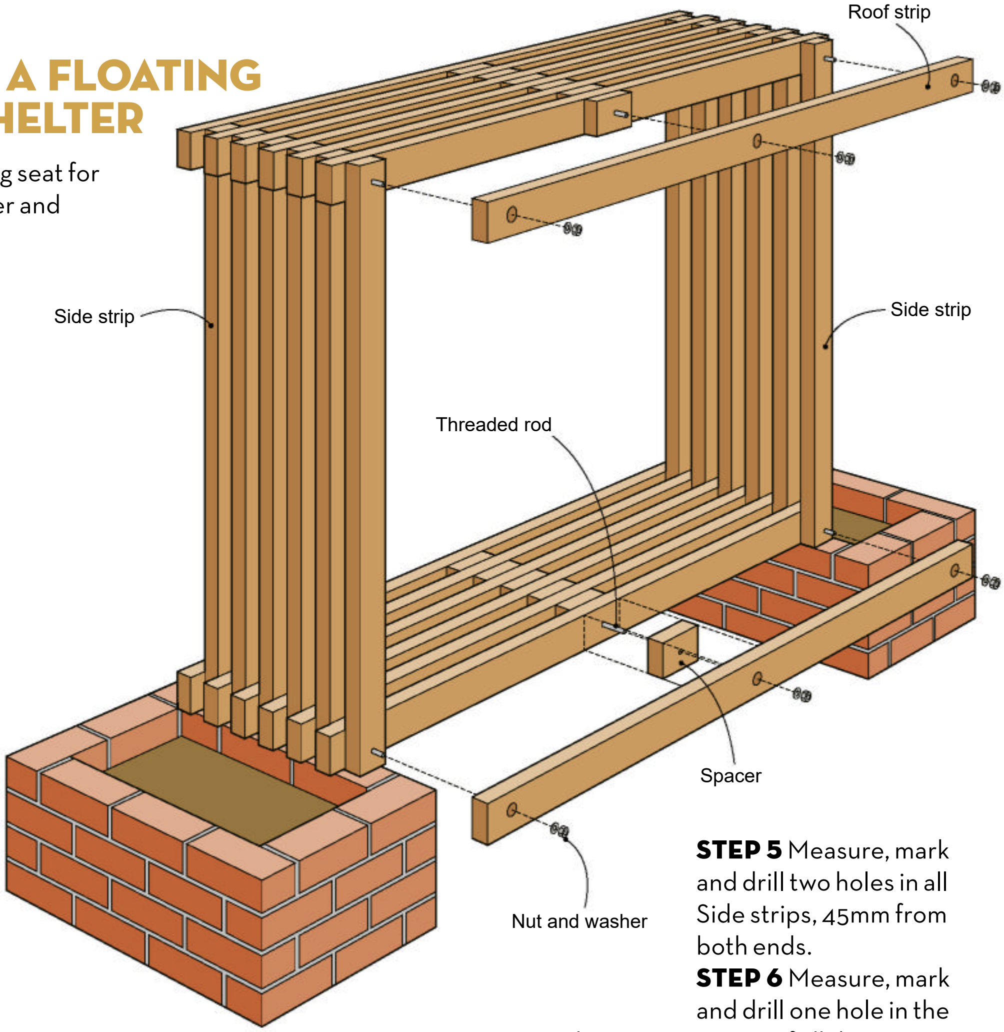
IT'S ALL IN THE ASPECT

When you're surrounded by walls, or have a south-facing garden, sunlight on your plants can be significantly reduced. Plant strategically to maximise the light you've been dealt.

- **Note what times sunlight** and shade hit your space. It will differ in summer when the sun is high in the sky and in winter when it's low. Buy sun or shade-loving plants that thrive in that space. Save money by buying second-hand plants (see page 90).
- **Look at the shade** cast by neighbouring trees. Don't think of them as a nuisance, instead incorporate them in your design. It's called a 'borrowed landscape'.
- **Choose plants with silver or pale colours** to counter dark walls and fences. An olive tree with its silver under-leaves glistens in the light and native saltbush is a lovely, sprawling grey-blue shrub. Hang dichondra 'Silver Falls' from a wall, or add dusty miller or lamb's ear (*Stachys byzantina*) for texture and shape.
- **Rather than hide walls** or fences with a solid hedge, create a gentle buffer with a few tall plants along the wall. It gives a sense of privacy without making you feel hemmed in. You'll save money by buying fewer plants.
- **Plant in layers** to create a greater sense of space. Under a small tree, put in ground-cover or small leafy plants for contrast such as liriope, clivia, mondo grass or sedge.
- **Mix ornamentals with fruit, herbs and vegetables** when space is tight. Some vegies, such as Swiss chard, kale and cabbage, are actually very ornamental.

EASY STEPS TO A FLOATING BENCH WITH SHELTER

Create an architectural-looking seat for your garden with budget timber and simple woodworking.

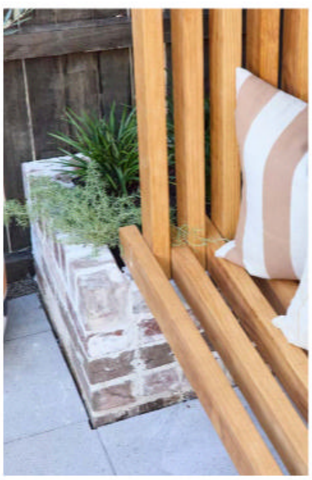


Gather your supplies

- 90 x 45mm H3 outdoor framing pine 6m (8)
- M12 x 3m galvanised threaded rod
- M12 nuts (12)
- 60 x 60 x 70 x 3mm black heavy-duty angle brackets (4)
- 14g 30mm galvanised hex screws

You'll also need

Combination square, pencil; tape measure; mitre saw; drill; 13mm drill bit; countersink drill bit; angle grinder; file; socket set.



Safety notes: When operating power tools, wear safety glasses, a mask and earmuffs, and tie your hair back.

Here's how

STEP 1 With a combination square and pencil, scribe a centre line along the length of all timber lengths. Take care to ensure all lengths are equally marked.

STEP 2 Measure, mark and cut all components with a tape measure, pencil, combination square and mitre saw.

STEP 3 Measure and mark across the centre of a Seat strip (1050mm from ends). Repeat to mark 100mm from both ends. With a 13mm drill bit and drill, drill through timber on marked positions.

STEP 4 Use the drilled Seat strip from Step 3 as a template to drill three holes in all the remaining Seat and Roof strips.

STEP 5 Measure, mark and drill two holes in all Side strips, 45mm from both ends.

STEP 6 Measure, mark and drill one hole in the centre of all the Spacers (75mm from ends).

STEP 7 To reinforce the structure, measure six 540mm lengths of threaded rod and cut with an angle grinder. File sharp edges.

STEP 8 Dry assemble seven Seat strips with six Spacers placed between them. Insert the threaded rod through the drilled centre holes. Secure nuts at both ends with a ratchet and socket.

STEP 9 Lay the Seat flat and in its final position. Check level. To connect the Seat to the Side strips, insert threaded rod length through the front Seat strip with a Side strip standing upright and between the Seat strips. Repeat until all

Part	Size (in mm)	Material	Qty
Seat strip	90 x 45 x 2100	H3 framing pine	7
Roof strip	90 x 45 x 2100	H3 framing pine	7
Side strip	90 x 45 x 1400	H3 framing pine	12
Spacer	90 x 45 x 150	H3 framing pine	12

Projects Grahame Rowe; diagram Steve Pollitt

RECYCLED BRICK RAISED GARDEN BED

Reclaimed bricks are a practical and sustainable material for building a raised garden bed.

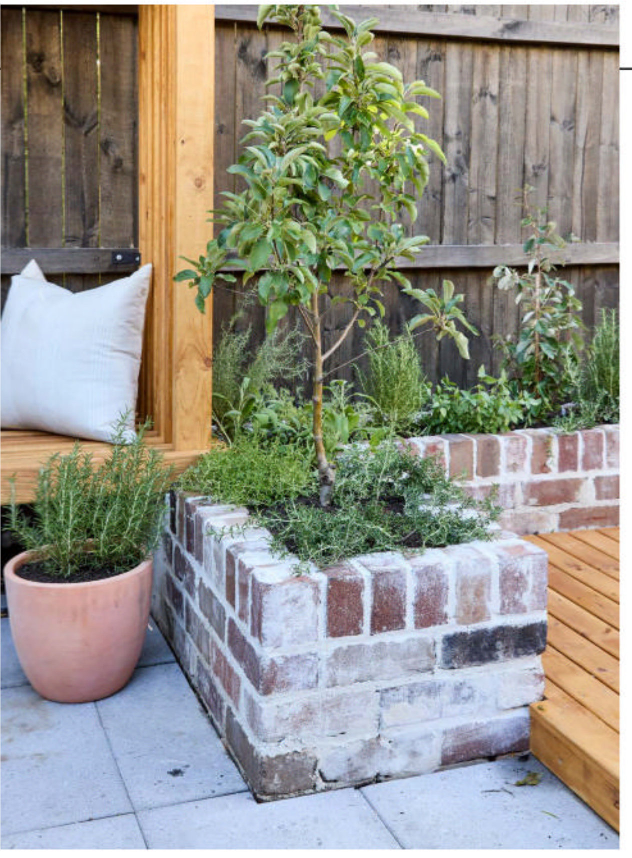
The whitewashed effect is achieved by mixing six parts white sand with one part white cement to create mortar.

Lay a 25mm bed of mixed mortar directly onto the concrete with a trowel. Embed a course of bricks onto the mortar with 10mm of mortar 'buttered' onto the end of the bricks.

Tap the bricks with a mallet and use a level until the course (layer) is level.

Lay the second course starting with half a brick closest to the wall. (Cut bricks in half with a brick bolster and hammer.)

Our brick planters ran for three courses of bricks, capped with a row of half bricks.

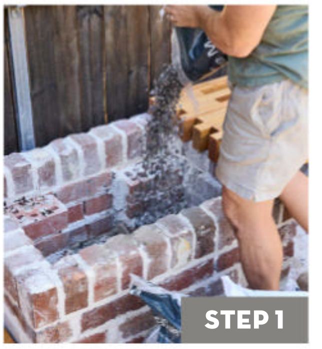


Planting your raised garden bed

STEP 1 Line the bottom of the raised garden bed with blue metal to a depth of about 5-10cm to provide good drainage and reduce the quantity of soil you need.

STEP 2 Line the inside of the garden bed with geotextile fabric.

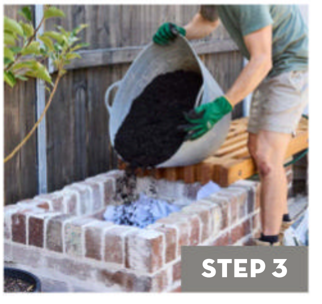
STEP 3 Top with quality soil suitable for your chosen plants. The geotextile fabric prevents soil falling into the blue metal. Put in plants and water well.



STEP 1



STEP 2



STEP 3

Side strips are connected to one side of the Seat. Attach and tighten nuts to both ends, then repeat for the Seat's other end.

STEP 10 Stabilise the Side panels to the wall or fence posts using a drill, brackets and screws. Check level.

STEP 11 With an extra pair of hands, insert the threaded rod through the Side strips, Roof strips and remaining spacers. Secure ends and through the centre with nuts.

FOR PROJECT SUPPLIES, SEE STOCKISTS ON P192.



DURABLE GOOD LOOKS

Charlie reinvigorated the hardwood fence in this garden project with elbow grease and a coat of charcoal exterior stain. If you're looking for an alternative and easy to maintain fencing solution, check out fencing made from COLORBOND® steel for a good-looking and durable option. It won't rot or be eaten by termites and is easy to maintain. Once it's installed, there's no need to spend your time painting, oiling or replacing palings. With 15 colours to choose from, it's easy to coordinate your fence with the colours of your home. ■

SPONSORED



Think twice and don't make these costly DIY mistakes! These nine home fixes are best left to the pros. *Words* LAURA BARRY

DIY OR DON'T

Here at BHG, we love a DIY project. However, there are a few projects and home improvements you really shouldn't do yourself unless you are a certified professional.

We spoke to our friends at Witzer, a project management app that's on a mission to bring trust and confidence back into renovations, to get their thoughts on these projects.

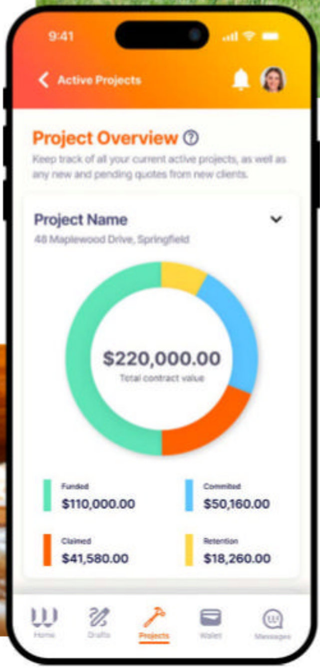
Some of these require experienced tradies either due to their complexity or simply because it isn't legal to DIY. In other cases, getting it wrong and needing to have it fixed could be far more costly than having paid for a professional to do it in the first place. For the following home updates, stay on track of your budget by downloading the free project management tool and payment app by Witzer, giving you peace of mind that hiring a pro will be money well spent.

1 REMOVING INSULATION

If you live in a house built before the 1980s, then the insulation could be contaminated with asbestos, which poses huge health risks for those who come into contact with it. If you suspect your insulation contains asbestos, call in the professionals to handle it.







2 PLUMBING

Any kind of bathroom renovation that involves plumbing repairs, installations and other maintenance should only ever be handled by the professionals. Far too many things can go wrong. Even getting access to problem points can cause more damage to your property than necessary if attempted by an inexperienced handyperson.

3 INSTALLING AN AIR-CONDITIONER

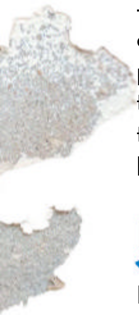
In Australia, all air-conditioning systems need to be installed by a professional who is approved by the Australian Refrigeration Council (ARC), as

Photography Alan Jensen, Adobe Stock, Getty Images

these systems can be dangerous to both you and the environment if mishandled.

4 REMOVING OLD WALLS

Depending on the structure of your home, certain walls are playing a huge role in keeping the roof above your head – literally! Always call in a building professional to assess the walls you want to remove before knocking them down.



5 REMOVING LEAD PAINT

Lead-based paint is still present in some old homes in Australia. As there are quite a few health and safety risks when it comes to dealing with lead-based paint, it may be better to hire someone experienced in lead-paint management and removal.

6 ROOFING

Generally speaking, if a job requires you to get up high, such as on the roof, then it's best that you don't attempt it yourself unless you have experience working at heights and making roof repairs.



7 PHONE LINES

Don't try to fix a phone line. Telstra is responsible for maintaining and fixing the connections throughout Australia, so call them before you do anything else.



8 INSTALLING A GAS APPLIANCE

For a gas cooktop or water heater, you'll need a licensed gas-fitter to connect or service the appliance.

9 INSTALLING A DISHWASHER

Dishwashers require both water and electrical connections, which is an involved operation at best. It will be easier and quicker to pay someone to install it. ■



AN AFFORDABLE

AUSSIE ROAD TRIP

Check out these 'stop off and look' destinations that won't break the bank.

Words RACHEL IORFINO



Photography Adobe Stock, Getty Images



A road trip isn't complete without plenty of stops; at the petrol station, the local grocery store for snacks, much-needed coffees, and sometimes just because you need to stretch your legs. The next time you go cross-country travelling, why not consider stopping off for the joy of a new sight to see?

Be prepared to get to know our beautiful country better. These magic road-trip moments are always the most memorable, and they're as low-cost as you can get.

1

All the big things

While the Big Banana might come to mind first, there are many other surprising statues to visit across Australia.

These massive monuments usually indicate a regional abundance of produce, such as the **Big Mango in Bowen, Qld** or the **Big Murray Cod in Tocumwal, NSW**. Sometimes, they're named after a person like the **Big Ned Kelly in Glenrowan, Vic**, or even the place that they're in like the **Big Bogan in Bogan, NSW** (although this one could just be an abundance of personality!).

If you want to feel tiny next to a giant sheep or piece of fruit, there are more than 150 'big things' for you to visit and get a happy snap with.

Here are just a few of our favourites:

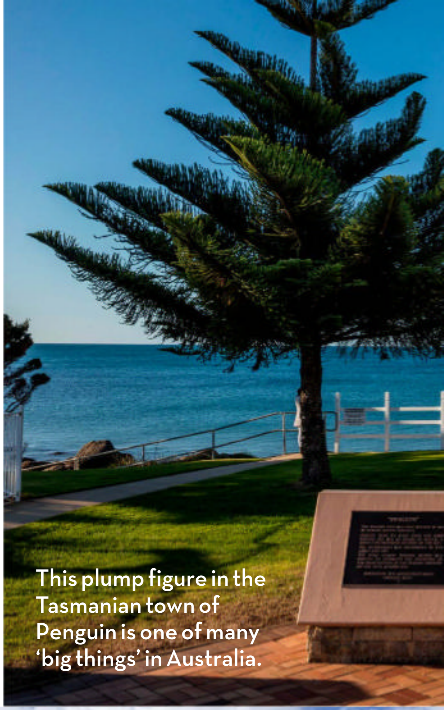
- **The Big Merino, Goulburn, NSW**
- **The Big Bench, Broken Hill, NSW**
- **The Big Orange, Berri, SA**
- **The Big Barramundi, Normanton, Qld**
- **The Big Penguin, Penguin, Tas.**

2

Paint the town

Melbourne is known for its street art, but it's not the only place in Australia that loves to paint. Head to **Sheffield in Tasmania** to see more than 160 murals in the town. Grab a coffee from a local cafe and wander the creative streets. If you visit in November for the annual Mural Fest, you'll see artists in action.

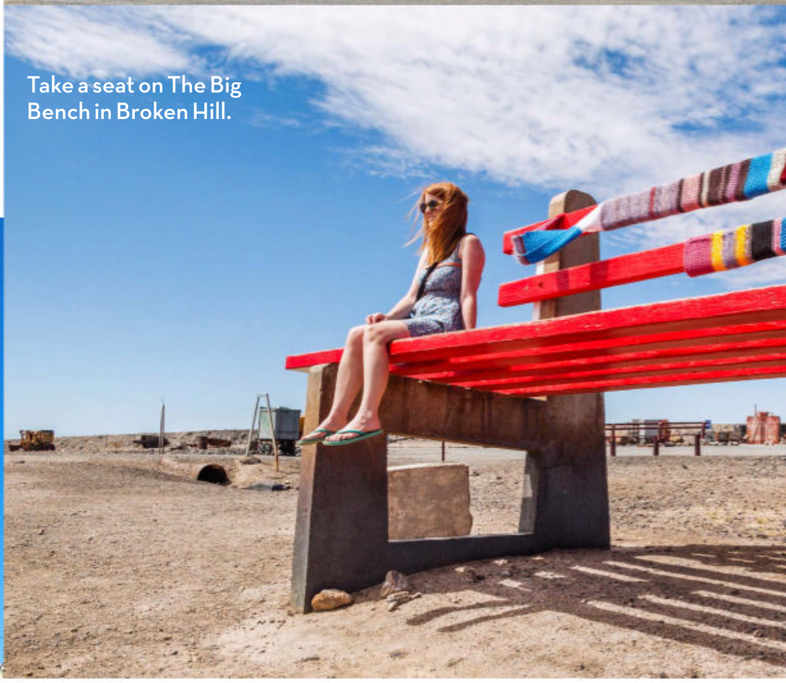
If you crave a bigger outdoor gallery, then the **Australian Silo Art Trail** is just the thing. You'll see huge painted silos and water tanks depicting Aussie heroes, animals and natural wonders. This trail stretches for more than 10,000km across rural towns – all the way from WA to Qld. You'll find some of our favourite murals in Wool Bay, SA, Northam, WA, Yelarbon, Qld and Barraba, NSW.



This plump figure in the Tasmanian town of Penguin is one of many 'big things' in Australia.



Australian birds painted large in Tungamah, Vic.



Take a seat on The Big Bench in Broken Hill.



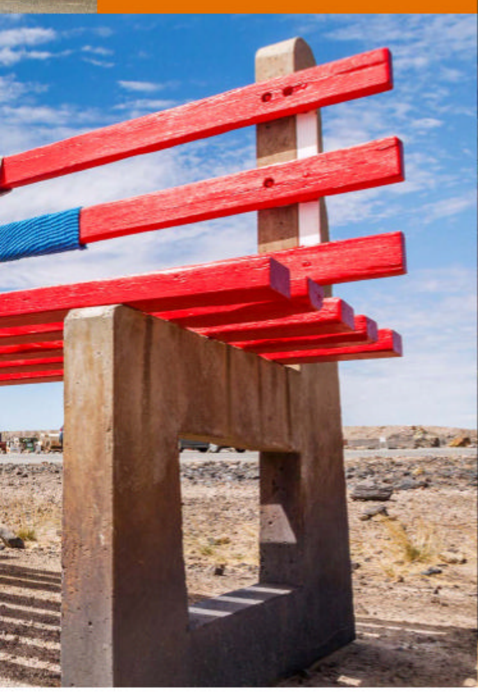
The Big Merino in Goulburn raises the baa.





PLAY A GAME

Bored of I Spy? Then try the number plate game as you drive. Search for a number plate from each state and territory. The first person to spot all eight wins! After that, try Spotto. You get a point for yelling "Spotto!" when you spy a yellow car, and "Super Spotto!" if you see a pink car.





The murals in Sheffield, Tas, depict rural life and historic events.



Area 52 eat your heart out, this is Mungo National Park.



3

Unusual natural wonders

If you're in search of the weird and wonderful, then it's time to see more of Australia's unique natural phenomena.

With its red dirt and ancient dry lake, **Mungo National Park in NSW** does a great job of looking like Mars. Enjoy the silence or learn more about the area's Indigenous culture.

At Karlu Karlu **(Devils Marbles) in the NT** you'll find a geological balancing act; ancient granite boulders arranged in interesting and strange formations. You can stay overnight at the Devils Marbles Conservation Reserve to witness them in all their red glory at sunset or sunrise. But show some respect and don't climb this sacred site.

Want more classic rock? Head to **Elephant Rocks** in William Bay National Park near Denmark, WA, to see huge 'elephants' frolicking in crystal-clear turquoise water. Have a swim in the calm waters of nearby Greens Pool beach while you're there.

DID YOU KNOW?

There are more than 650 national parks across Australia, perfect for low-cost sightseeing. You'll find incredible diversity, from lush rainforests through to outback deserts.



Karlu Karlu (the Devils Marbles), about 100km south of Tennant Creek in the NT.



Strut your stuff on the stark red earth at Kings Canyon Rim Walk.



Swim with giants at Elephant Rocks near Denmark, WA.



4 Off the beaten track

Some of the best places seem to be the furthest away. Bondi Beach may be one of the best-known tourist destinations, but these quiet attractions are well worth the trip.

Yarrangobilly Caves thermal pool is hidden deep in Kosciuszko National Park, NSW. Fed by a natural spring, the water stays an inviting 27°C year-round.

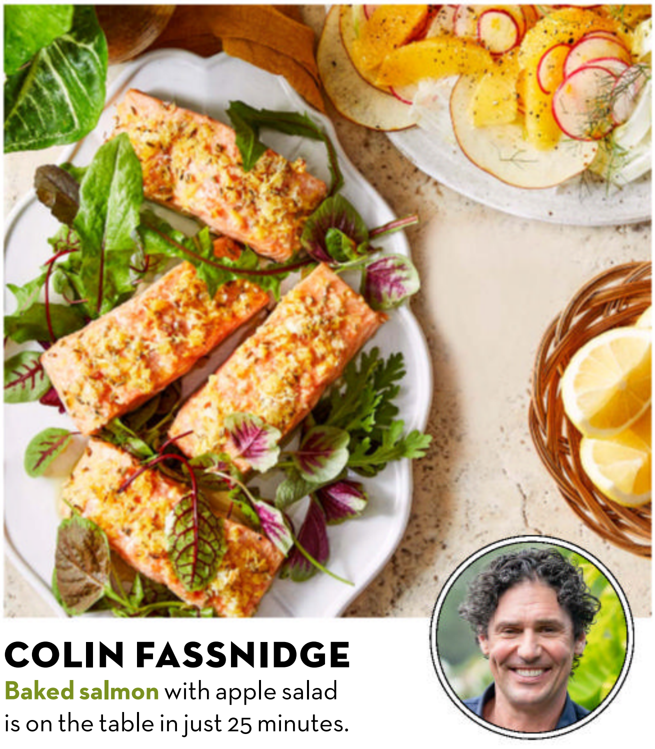
Kings Canyon Rim Walk in the NT's Watarrka National Park is for hikers and fans of *The Adventures of Priscilla, Queen of the Desert*. It's a bit of a climb, but the views are unparalleled. It's also much easier to do not wearing outrageous heels! ■



Take a dip in the secluded Yarrangobilly Caves thermal pool.

BHGTV FAVOURITES

To find these fantastic recipes, projects, advice and much more, scan the QR code or visit **bhg.com.au**.



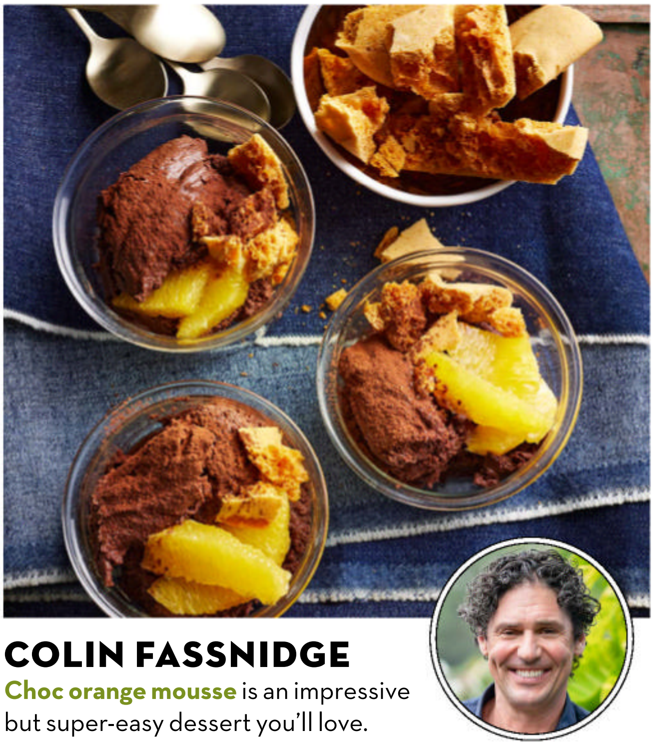
COLIN FASSNIDGE

Baked salmon with apple salad is on the table in just 25 minutes.



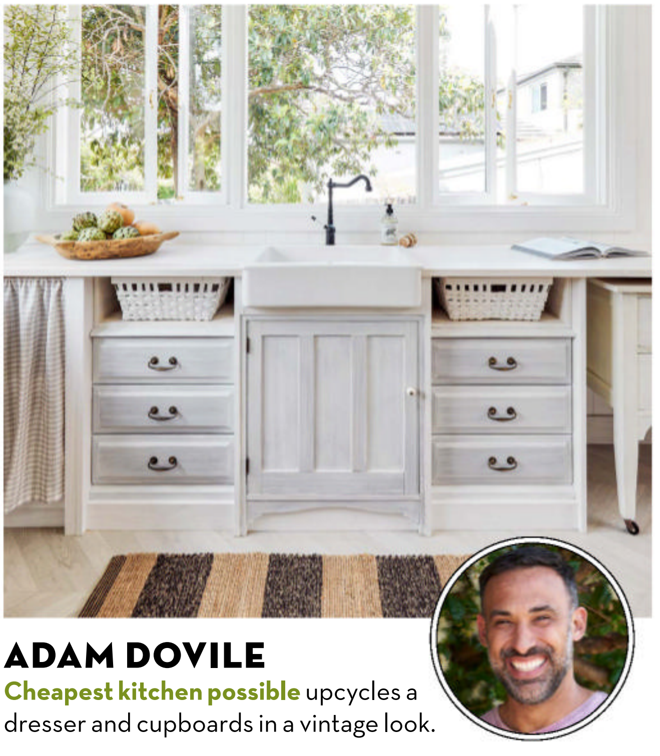
CLARISSA FEILDEL

Ghee cookies are buttery, egg-free and melt-in-your-mouth addictive.



COLIN FASSNIDGE

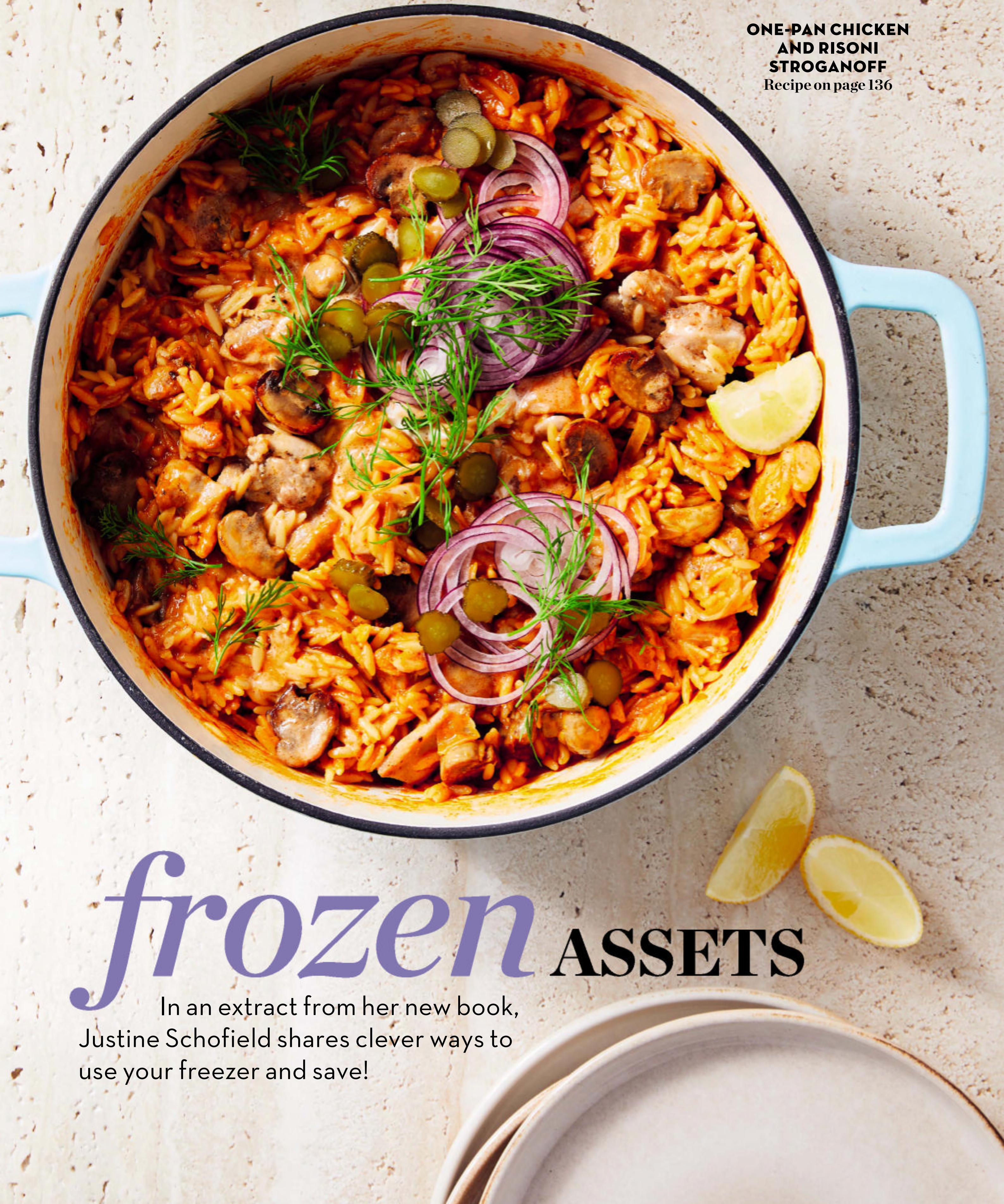
Choc orange mousse is an impressive but super-easy dessert you'll love.



ADAM DOVILE

Cheapest kitchen possible upcycles a dresser and cupboards in a vintage look.


Escape to a world of calm
LET ARE MEDIA PUZZLE BOOKS TRANSPORT YOU
PUZZLES TO KEEP YOUR BRAIN ACTIVE
The Australian Women's Weekly
Win! $80,161 in Cash & Prizes
PUZZLE BOOK 103
HUNDREDS of chances to WIN
Better Homes and Gardens Puzzle Book
260+ PUZZLES
Win! OVER $75,000 IN CASH & PRIZES
New Idea JUMBO PUZZLER
120+ PUZZLES
Win! $55,600+
PUZZLES TO GIVE YOUR BRAIN A WORKOUT
The clever way to relax
Woman's Day super PUZZLER
Over $60,000 in cash & prizes
Cypher Squares • Crosswords • Fill-ins • Trivia
Word Searches • Clue-ins • Sudokus • AND more!
WE are PUZZLES



ONE-PAN CHICKEN AND RISONI STROGANOFF
Recipe on page 136

frozen ASSETS

In an extract from her new book, Justine Schofield shares clever ways to use your freezer and save!



CHEESY TUNA MACARONI

Recipe on page 136

After cooking on TV and sharing her recipes for more than 15 years, Justine Schofield is a familiar face for Australia's home cooks. Her new book, *Cook Ahead*, focuses on easing the stress of what's for dinner every night. These recipes can be made in advance, frozen, then easily thawed. Here she tells us about her book and shares some clever budget-saving ideas.

BHG: What inspired your book?
JS: I wanted this book to have the food my followers want to cook and eat every day. We are all so time poor, including myself (especially with a toddler and my busy work schedule), that having dishes that can be cooked ahead, frozen and thawed is a lifesaver.
BHG: What do you cook when you're trying to save money?
JS: I always turn to my freezer, pantry and fridge and try to come up with dishes that revolve around ingredients I already have. You'd be surprised how creative you can be by just making an effort to use what you already have. For example, I always have a stew of some sort in the freezer, so I love to thaw that and top it with puff pastry for a quick midweek pie.
BHG: Are there some things that people may be surprised to find out they can freeze?
JS: Many foods can be frozen, but the real question is whether the ingredient maintains its quality after being cooked from frozen or thawed. A few stand-out ingredients that thrive from being frozen are:
Cooked rice – it dries out slightly, but once you thaw it and use it in a fried rice, its texture is so lovely.
Bread – especially if you freeze it when it's fresh.
Butter – when I buy a big batch of butter and don't use it all, I freeze portions. It will stay fresh for longer.
Nuts – freezing nuts stops them from going rancid.
Herbs – just pop them in olive oil or butter and freeze in an ice-cube tray.



> “FRIED RICE IS A POPULAR, BUDGET-FRIENDLY DISH IN OUR HOUSEHOLD.”
>
> JUSTINE SCHOFIELD – *COOK AHEAD* AUTHOR

Cheese – shredded cheddar and mozzarella freeze well.
Egg whites – if you're only using egg yolks in a recipe, don't throw away the egg whites. They freeze well (for up to 12 months) and are great for a future pavlova or biscuits.
BHG: Do you have a go-to shortcut ingredient?
JS: Puff pastry or my easy homemade shortcrust pastry. I keep a stash in the freezer for when I want a quick quiche, a pie, or little snacks like pinwheels.
BHG: Do you have a favourite kitchen gadget under $10?
JS: I have this super sharp, wide kitchen peeler that's absolutely perfect to finely shred cabbage. I love it but I only got it for $10 because it was on sale. That still counts though!
BHG:What's the most used utensil?
JS: Apart from my chef's knife, I can't live without my fine microplane. It's perfect for mincing garlic and ginger and finely grating parmesan.
BHG: Your best cost-saving tip?
JS: Plan ahead and you'll save on food costs. Cooking ahead, bulk-buying and freezing ingredients that are a good price because they're in season (like mangoes and berries in summer) helps you save money. You'll rarely waste food if you use your freezer as a tool to preserve ingredients and meals.



MINI SAUSAGE ROLLS
Recipe on page 138



ONE-PAN CHICKEN AND RISONI STROGANOFF

Serves 4–6

500g boneless, skinless chicken thigh fillets (about 4), cut into 4cm pieces
Sea-salt flakes and freshly ground black pepper
1 Tbsp extra virgin olive oil
1 onion, sliced
2 garlic cloves, chopped
200g button mushrooms, halved
2 tsp sweet paprika
1 Tbsp tomato paste
100ml white wine (such as chardonnay or sauvignon blanc)
750ml (3 cups) chicken stock
200g (1¼ cups) risoni (orzo)
2 Tbsp sour cream

TOPPING
2 dill fronds, chopped
1 small red onion, finely sliced
2–4 gherkins, finely sliced
Juice of ¼ lemon

STEP 1 Season chicken with salt and pepper. Heat olive oil in a saute pan over medium–high heat and seal chicken on both sides for 1–2 minutes or until golden. Remove and place on a plate.
STEP 2 Add onion and garlic to the same pan and fry for 5 minutes, stirring regularly, until the onion and garlic are soft and caramelised. Add the mushrooms, stir to combine them with the onion mixture and fry for another 4–5 minutes or until softened. Stir through the paprika and cook off for a few seconds before adding tomato paste and again stirring to coat everything. Tip in the wine and bring to the boil. Add stock and risoni and return chicken pieces and any juices on the plate to the pan.
STEP 3 Cover pan with lid and cook over low heat for 20–25 minutes or until chicken is cooked and risoni has absorbed all the liquid. Remove from heat and fold through sour cream.
STEP 4 To make topping, mix dill, red onion, gherkin and lemon juice in a bowl, season to taste, then sprinkle over chicken and risoni to serve.

FREEZE

Portion stroganoff into airtight containers. Cool, seal, label and date. Freeze for up to 3 months.

THAW

Thaw stroganoff overnight in the fridge. Or microwave from frozen following the reheating instructions.

REHEAT

Heat thawed stroganoff with a splash of water in a covered sauté pan over medium-low heat for 8–10 minutes, stirring regularly, until heated through. Alternatively, microwave thawed stroganoff on HIGH for 3–4 minutes. If frozen, microwave on HIGH for 6–8 minutes, stirring regularly, until hot throughout.



CHEESY TUNA MACARONI

Serves 4–6

250g can tuna in spring water, drained
125g (1 cup) freshly grated cheddar, plus extra 60g (½ cup) for topping
120g (1 cup) frozen mixed peas and corn
200g macaroni (or other short pasta of your choice)
Sea-salt flakes (optional)
2 slices of day-old sourdough bread, blitzed into crumbs
Extra virgin olive oil, for drizzling

WHITE SAUCE
50g unsalted butter
50g (⅓ cup) plain flour
800ml milk of your choice
2 Tbsp dijon mustard
pinch of freshly grated nutmeg

STEP 1 To make the white sauce, melt the butter in a saucepan over medium heat. Add flour and stir for 30 seconds to cook off the flour. Gradually whisk in the milk to ensure there are no lumps and cook until the sauce begins to boil and thicken. Season with mustard and nutmeg.
STEP 2 Add tuna, cheese and peas and corn to the sauce and fold through.
STEP 3 Cook pasta in a saucepan of boiling salted water until al dente. Use a slotted spoon to spoon pasta into the cheesy tuna sauce (it's okay if a little of the pasta cooking water goes in, too; about ½ cup of pasta cooking water is ideal to help create a nice sauce). Fold pasta through the cheese sauce. Check seasoning, adding salt if needed.
STEP 4 Preheat the oven grill. Portion macaroni into 250ml (1-cup) capacity ramekins (or any ovenproof dish/es of your choice). Mix breadcrumbs with extra cheese and a drizzle of olive oil, then sprinkle over macaroni and grill for a few minutes, until golden and crisp on top.

FREEZE

Once breadcrumb topping has been added, cover each ramekin with foil and seal well. Label, date and freeze for up to 3 months.

THAW

Thaw the tuna macaroni overnight in the fridge. Or simply microwave from frozen following the reheat instructions.

REHEAT

Remove foil from the ramekin and bake the thawed macaroni in a 180°C fan-forced oven for 25–30 minutes. Or remove foil from the frozen macaroni and microwave on HIGH for 4–5 minutes to heat through, then place under an oven grill to crisp up the topping.



CHUNKY CHOCOLATE CHIP COOKIES
Recipe on page 138

“ANOTHER BENEFIT TO FREEZING THIS DOUGH IS IT INTENSIFIES THE FLAVOUR AND GIVES THE COOKIES A BETTER TEXTURE.”

JUSTINE SCHOFIELD – *COOK AHEAD* AUTHOR



MINI SAUSAGE ROLLS

Makes 30

3 squares frozen butter puff pastry, just thawed
1 egg, lightly beaten, for egg wash

FILLING
1 Tbsp extra virgin olive oil
1 onion, finely diced
1 carrot, coarsely grated
1 small zucchini, coarsely grated
500g pork or beef mince
1 egg
2 Tbsp tomato sauce, plus extra to serve
½ tsp fennel seeds
140 g (2 cups) fresh breadcrumbs
Sea-salt flakes and freshly ground black pepper

SPICE CRUMB
½ tsp nigella seeds
½ tsp sesame seeds
½ tsp dried oregano
½ tsp fennel seeds

STEP 1 For the filling, heat olive oil in a frying pan over medium heat, add onion, carrot and zucchini and cook for 4–5 minutes to soften. Spoon into a large bowl and cool to room temperature.
STEP 2 Add mince to onion mixture along with egg, tomato sauce, fennel seeds, breadcrumbs and a good pinch of salt and pepper. Mix well with your hands until a sticky mixture forms. Divide mince filling into six even portions, then shape each portion into a 24cm long log.
STEP 3 Cut each sheet of pastry in half so you have six rectangles. Line a large baking tray with baking paper.
STEP 4 Place a pastry rectangle on your work surface so the long sides face you. Now arrange a log of filling in a line along one long side of the pastry. Brush egg wash on other long edge and roll up pastry to enclose the filling. Transfer to tray, seam-side down, and brush again with egg wash. Repeat with remaining pastry, filling and egg wash until you have six long sausage rolls.
STEP 5 Combine the spice crumb ingredients in a bowl and sprinkle over the sausage rolls. Refrigerate for 30 minutes (makes cutting sausage rolls into smaller portions easier and neater).
STEP 6 Preheat oven to 190°C fan-forced.
STEP 7 Cut each long sausage roll into five portions (or whatever size sausage rolls you like). Bake for 30–35 minutes or until pastry is deep golden and filling is cooked through.
STEP 8 Cool the mini sausage rolls for at least 10 minutes before serving with some tomato sauce. Store leftover sausage rolls in an airtight container in the fridge for up to 4 days.

FREEZE

Once the spice crumb is added, wrap uncooked sausage logs in baking paper and plastic wrap. Label, date and freeze for up to 6 months.

THAW

Thaw logs for 5 minutes at room temperature – any longer and they will be hard to cut into portions

REHEAT

Place mini sausage rolls on a large lined baking tray and bake at 190°C fan-forced for 40–45 minutes.



CHUNKY CHOCOLATE CHIP COOKIES

Makes 14

250g butter, cut into 2cm cubes and softened
185g (1 cup) soft brown sugar
115g (½ cup) caster sugar
2 eggs, at room temperature
450g (3 cups) plain flour
1 tsp cornflour
1 tsp bicarbonate of soda
½ tsp sea-salt flakes, plus extra for sprinkling
300g (2 cups) roughly chopped dark chocolate (70% cacao)

STEP 1 Line a baking tray that fits in your freezer with baking paper.
STEP 2 Add butter, brown sugar and caster sugar to the bowl of an electric mixer fitted with a whisk attachment. Beat on high speed for 3–4 minutes or until pale and creamy. Add eggs, one at a time, beating well after each addition. Using a spatula, fold in flour, cornflour, bicarbonate of soda and salt. Mix until just combined – do not overmix; dough should still be a bit crumbly. Stir in chopped chocolate, reserving a little.
STEP 3 Roll 2–3 tablespoons of dough into large or extra-large balls and place on the tray, pressing down slightly on each one. Sprinkle on reserved chocolate and a tiny bit of salt. Chill in freezer for at least 30 minutes, or overnight for best results!
STEP 4 When ready to bake, preheat oven to 190°C fan-forced.
STEP 5 Transfer tray to oven and bake for 12–15 minutes or until the cookies are just golden brown on the edges. (The cookies' size will affect cooking time and extra-large cookies may need a little longer.) Allow cookies to cool on tray for 10–15 minutes. They will still be soft when they come out of the oven, but the cooling time allows them to set.
STEP 6 Once cool, enjoy the cookies straight away or store in an airtight container in the pantry for up to 5 days.

FREEZE

Transfer frozen uncooked cookies from the tray to zip-lock bags. Freeze for up to 6 months.

REHEAT

No need to thaw! Bake frozen cookies following the baking instructions above. They may need an extra 5 minutes or so in the oven.



FROZEN YOGHURT BARS

Recipe on page 140

COOK AHEAD

by Justine Schofield, with photography by Rob Palmer (Plum, $39.99), is out now. Scan to shop.



FROZEN YOGHURT BARS

Makes 16

125g blueberries
125g raspberries
150g dates, pitted
140g (½ cup) peanut butter (or any nut or seed butter of your choice)
150g (1½ cups) rolled oats
30g (¼ cup) LSA (or any nut meal)
½ tsp ground cinnamon
375 g (1½ cups) Greek-style yoghurt
3 Tbsp maple syrup

STEP 1 Place berries and 1 tablespoon of water in a small saucepan, cover with a lid and cook over low heat for 5–8 minutes, until berries just start to break down. Roughly mash berries with a fork, then cool to room temperature.
STEP 2 Line a 20cm square brownie tin with two sheets of plastic wrap.
STEP 3 Combine the dates and peanut butter in a food processor and blitz to form a rough paste. Add oats, LSA and cinnamon, then pulse to combine. Pour oat mixture into the tin and smooth out with the back of a spoon, pressing down firmly so surface is even and compact.
STEP 4 Combine the yoghurt and maple syrup in a bowl and pour over the oat mixture, spreading out evenly. Dollop cooled berries on top with a dessertspoon. Use the back of the spoon to form ripples, so the yoghurt and berries marble together. Place in the freezer for 3–4 hours or until completely solid.
STEP 5 Remove the slice from the freezer and thaw slightly. Use the plastic wrap to lift it out of the tin. Cut into 16 bars. Eat immediately or freeze.

FREEZE

Place yoghurt bars in an airtight container with baking paper between each layer so the bars don't stick together. Seal, label and date. Freeze for up to 1 month.

EASY FREEZY

Like most people, I've been guilty of popping an unlabelled leftover curry in the freezer only to discover it as an unidentifiable frozen object six months later and throwing it out. I hate waste, so now I'm passionate about making my freezer super organised – it's easy to find what I'm looking for and maximises space.

Hot tips on how to organise your freezer better

Categorise
Dividing your freezer space into categories makes items easier to access. That means putting vegies together, raw meat together, and frozen meals in another section. I also put frequently used items at the front, so I can grab them easily. Clear labelling is a must, too.

Do a reset and rotate
Every six months, rotate what's in your freezer. Bring everything that is at the back or getting close to being out of date to the front so you use it. Discard anything that's past its use-by date or has freezer burn. Food loses quality with long freezing. As a guide, freeze soups and stews, baked cakes and quiches for three to six months; raw mince and diced meat for three months; and raw meat and poultry for up to six months.

Use freezer space efficiently
Portion and pack wisely so you can find what you want when you want it. I use zip-lock bags that I flatten to remove excess air and stack easily (it speeds up thawing, too!). They're great for raw mince and for mashed or chopped fruits and vegies. I also have airtight containers of different sizes for leftovers and make-ahead meals. ■



This is an edited extract from *Cook Ahead* by Justine Schofield (Plum, $39.99).



dinner for one

Delicious everyday ideas for when you're dining solo *Photography* TIM ROBERTS *Styling* MICHELE CRANSTON

INDIVIDUAL STEAK & MUSHROOM PIE

Preparation time 10 mins
Cooking time 45 mins
Serves 1

1 Tbsp olive oil
½ onion, chopped
1 clove garlic, crushed
150g beef rump steak, trimmed, cut into 2cm cubes
80g brown mushrooms, quartered
½ cup beef stock
2 Tbsp red wine
2 tsp gravy powder
2 tsp Worcestershire sauce
Pinch dried mixed herbs
¼ sheet frozen puff pastry, partially thawed
Sea-salt flakes and freshly ground black pepper to season
Steamed green beans, to serve

STEP 1 Preheat oven to 220°C/200°C fan-forced. In a small frying pan, heat oil on medium heat. Sauté onion and garlic for 3–4 minutes, until onion is tender. Add beef, cook for 2 minutes until brown on all sides. Add mushrooms and cook, stirring, for 2–3 minutes.

STEP 2 In a small jug, combine beef stock, wine and gravy powder until smooth. Stir into the meat mixture with sauce and herbs. Bring to the boil, stirring, for 4 minutes, until thickened. Reduce heat to low. Simmer, covered, 10 minutes, until beef is tender. Season.

STEP 3 Spoon beef mixture into a 1½-cup capacity ovenproof dish. Top with pastry, trimming to fit. Bake for 20 minutes, until the pastry is golden. Serve with steamed green beans. ■

Food preparation Mel Burge

better cooking

[THE LATEST FOODIE NEWS, PRODUCTS AND TRENDS]

SCAN ME
Scan this QR code to shop these items.



GOLD RUSH

Try a new flavour spin on your favourite chocky rabbit this Easter with a Salted Caramel Lindt Gold Bunny, 100g, $10. Its signature ribbon and bell is oh-so-cute, too!



BRIGHT BITE

Monterosa tomatoes look and smell the way tomatoes used to. They come in red, yellow, orange and brown and are beautiful in salads. Or try them sliced and served with a little sea salt – delicious! Store away from the sun at room temperature for a fuller flavour and best texture.

Wise Wheat it

Here's how to increase your fibre intake with ease. Wise Wheat has been developed by the CSIRO and Limagrain to have six times the fibre of regular wheat flour, with no change in taste. Look for bakery products with the Wise Wheat logo in the Woolworths Bakery.





STORE SMART

Keep fruit and vegies fresher for longer (and save money!) with the Anko 5 Piece Fridge Storage Set, $39. Adjustable air vents help maintain airflow to keep produce fresher and the clear containers mean you always know what's in the fridge.



FLAVOUR FAVE

Winner of MasterChef Australia 2021, Justin Narayan has released a vibrant collection of easy recipes. This is Indian made modern with clever time hacks and how-tos. Tuck in and enjoy. *Everything is Indian* (Murdoch Books, $39.99). ■

Tomatoes photography Perfection Fresh. Prices are approximate and a guide only.

WADDLE THIS WAY

Dive into an easy sewing project this Easter and make a quacky doorstop or bookend. With some scrap material and a bag of stones, your sitting duck will bring fun and colour to your nest!





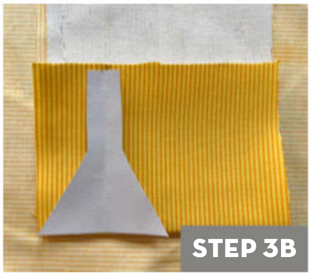
Words and Project TIFF BANCROFT *Photography* TIM ROBERTS *Styling* NONCI NYONI



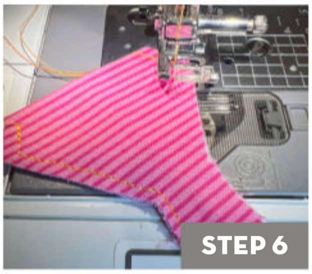
THIS PAGE Take your ducks up a level and onto a shelf to make cute bookends in a kid's bedroom. **OPPOSITE PAGE** Use your duck as a handy doorstop.

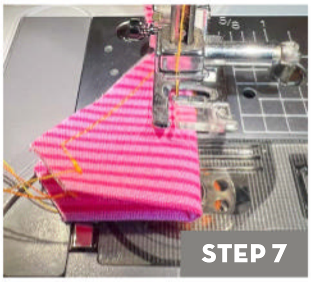
SEE SHOPPING DETAILS AND PROJECT SUPPLIES ON P192.













EASY STEPS TO SEWING A DUCK DOORSTOP

Gather your supplies

- Scrap fabric in contrasting prints
- 50 x 60cm interfacing (medium weight)
- 2kg mini pebbles
- 2 small buttons
- Cushion fill (handful)
- Scotchgard upholstery spray (optional)

You'll also need

Tape measure, craft scissors, iron and ironing board, stock card, pencil, fabric scissors, sewing machine, pinking shears (optional), knitting needle, funnel, sewing needle.



Here's how

STEP 1 For the body, cut a 50 x 50cm square of interfacing, then lay it sticky side up on the ironing board. Lay fabric on top of the interfacing, right side up. Use a hot iron to bond fabrics. Fold fabric in half with interfacing face out, then iron a crease along fold.

STEP 2 For the beak and feet, repeat Step 1 with 10 x 50cm of contrasting scrap fabric and interfacing. Fold fabric in half lengthways and iron the fold.

STEP 3 Print pattern (on page 184) onto thick paper or card. Cut out all pattern components. Lay patterns onto folded fabrics and trace around pattern. Draw a 2cm seam allowance around the traced shape and mark up attachment points for the eyes, beak and feet. Cut out fabric along the seam allowance line.

STEP 4 With right sides of fabric facing, machine stitch the body together, leaving a gap between A-B. Backstitch on both ends. Repeat for beak and feet.

STEP 5 For a neat finish (and no puckering), use pinking shears to trim seams to 5mm from stitches. Turn pieces right-side out. Use the end of a knitting needle to poke open corners. Iron all components flat.

STEP 6 Set machine to a slow speed for precision, then sew a topstitch 5mm around the edge of both feet. Backstitch on both ends. Repeat for beak.

STEP 7 For feet detail, fold feet in half (vertically) and iron flat. Starting from bottom of foot, Sew 5mm in from fold along length of foot. Backstitch at both ends.

STEP 8 Trim thread ends on all components.

STEP 9 With a hot glue gun, apply a dab of glue to the marked beak position. Glue the beak in place so it's straight and symmetrical. Repeat to attach the feet in position.

STEP 10 Stuff the head and neck with cushion fill until firm. Insert a funnel into hole then fill with 2½ cups of mini pebbles.

STEP 11 For an invisible seam, use a needle and thread to hand sew the opening with a ladder stitch.

STEP 12 Attach buttons to eye positions with a needle and thread. Sew through the centre of the head for symmetrical eyes. ■



Fab fungi

Experiment with different sizes, colours and shapes to create whimsical fungi. To make these mushroom caps, we raided op shops and clearance racks for stretchy velvet clothing in a range of vivid hues. **Instructions on page 152.**

velvet

Looking for a new crush? It's easy to fall head over heels for lush and lavish velvet – especially with these affordable projects.

Photography JASON DONNELLY *Words* PAMELA PORTER



Lift up your feet

Relax in style with a plush patchwork of happy colour. It's a terrific technique to create a pattern using odds and ends. **Instructions on page 153.**



THIS FESTIVE WREATH IS PERFECT FOR EASTER, CHRISTMAS, OR JUST SPRUCING UP YOUR DECOR.

Wall flowers

Bring a circle of sweet-looking blooms and foliage indoors with this nature-inspired wreath. The bonus is it never needs watering!
Instructions on page 154.

Show your stripes

Velvet ribbons get it together in a textural pillow.

STEP 1 For the pillow back, cut a piece of fabric the size of your pillow form, plus 1.5cm on all sides for the seam. For the pillow front, quarter the pillow form size, add 1.5cm seam allowance on all sides, and cut four pieces of fabric this size.

STEP 2 Cut lengths of velvet ribbon slightly longer than the quartered pieces. Pin a ribbon to the fabric and topstitch along both edges using matching thread and removing pins as you sew. Repeat until ribbons are attached to all four smaller fabric pieces.

STEP 3 With right sides together, pin two of the pieces so ribbons are perpendicular and sew together. Repeat with the remaining two smaller pieces, and then sew the ribbon-covered pieces together to finish the pillow top.

STEP 4 With right sides together and leaving an opening for turning, pin and sew the pillow front to the pillow back. Trim excess fabric from corners and ribbon from seams, turn right side out, insert pillow form, and whipstitch closed.



First impressions

Use water and a rubber stamp to add a subtle design. **Instructions on page 154.**



Working with velvet

Follow these tried-and-true tips to make velvet projects fuss-free.

PILE 101 Because velvet pile shifts, mark and cut from the back of the fabric to ensure accuracy. Notice the direction of the pile before you cut. The fabric will appear darker if it is cut with pile running up than if cut running down (which makes it smooth and shiny). Be consistent with the direction of the pile unless changing it is part of your desired design. If the pile gets crushed, hang the fabric and steam about 5cm from the back of the velvet while using a soft, clean toothbrush to brush the pile softly back in place.

SNIP, SNIP Use sharp scissors and cut pieces in a single layer. For increased accuracy, use a sharp rotary cutter and a straightedge.

PIN IT Select fine straight pins to hold pieces together, testing pins first to make sure holes aren't visible when removed. Hand-basting instead of pinning may be worth the extra time. Consider using a walking foot on your sewing machine to help feed the fabric through smoothly when sewing thick layers or stretch fabric.

GET STEAMY Do not iron velvet or you will crush the pile, unless it's intentional as with the stamped design on page 154. If you need to remove wrinkles, place the velvet facedown on some terry towelling or needle board and carefully steam a few inches above the back of the fabric, moving in the direction of the pile.



DECORATIVE MUSHROOMS

Gather your supplies

- Driftwood (or tree branch)
- Garden snips or handsaw
- Mount board
- Stretch velvet
- Hot-glue gun and glue sticks
- Wadding
- Needle and matching thread

Here's how

STEP 1 For a stem, cut a 5–7cm length from the driftwood. From the mount board, cut a circle in a size proportionate to the stem. From the velvet, cut a circle about twice as large in diameter as the mount board circle.

STEP 2 Using hot glue, adhere the stem to the centre of the mount board circle. On the opposite side of the mount board, glue a ball of wadding at the centre.

STEP 3 Stitch a continuous running stitch around the perimeter of the velvet circle about 5mm from the edge. Lay the velvet circle over the wadding and chipboard and draw the thread tight on the underside. Pull taut around the stem and tie a knot to secure.



STEP 1



STEP 2



STEP 3A



STEP 3B

Projects Jeni Wright





STEP 3A



STEP 3B



STEP 3C



STEP 5

COLOUR-BLOCK OTTOMAN

Gather your supplies

- Jigsaw
- Plywood
- Spray contact adhesive
- 10cm-thick upholstery foam
- Serrated knife
- 2.5cm-thick wadding
- Needle and thread
- Upholstery-weight velvet in 12 colours
- Straight pins
- Thread to match velvet colours
- Sewing machine
- Staple gun and staples
- Four 15–20cm furniture legs and brackets
- Drill/driver and screws

Here's how

STEP 1 Cut a 1-metre diameter circle from the plywood. Using contact adhesive in a well-ventilated area, adhere upholstery foam to the plywood, piecing as necessary. Flip over and use a serrated knife to trim foam equal to the edges of the plywood circle.

STEP 2 Place plywood on top of wadding and cut around perimeter to get a 1-metre circle of wadding. Cut a 20cm wide strip of wadding long enough to wrap the perimeter of the plywood circle. Lay the wadding circle on the top of the foam and wrap the 20cm wide strip of wadding around the perimeter of the circle. Whipstitch the pieces of wadding together, catching the foam every once in a while.

STEP 3 Print pattern, and cut velvet pieces allowing for 1.5cm seam allowance. With right sides facing, pin pieces together and sew into pieced strips. Remove pins, then pin the seams open and topstitch each side of the seam using matching thread. Remove pins. Repeat to sew all of the strips together to form the top of the ottoman. Sew the side pieces into a strip. To finish the cover, sew the side strip to the top, making sure to match colours. Turn cover right side out.

STEP 4 Lay the velvet cover on top of the wadding on the plywood circle, then flip the project upside down. Pull one edge of the cover taut to the underside of the plywood and staple to secure. Repeat directly opposite the first staple and then again halfway between the first two staples. Continue pulling taut and stapling evenly around the entire circle. Trim excess velvet from the underside.

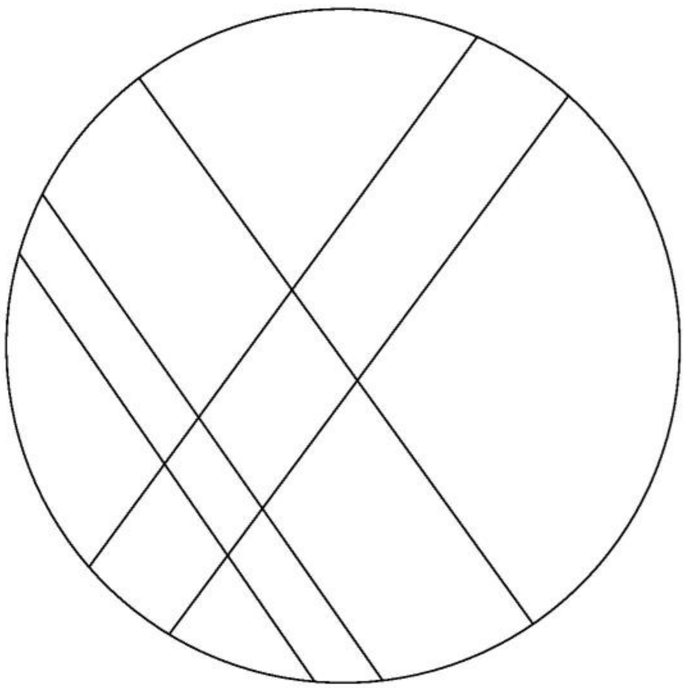
STEP 5 Mark intersecting lines to divide the circle into quarters. Where each line reaches the perimeter, install a leg bracket about 4cm from the outside edge. Screw legs into brackets and flip ottoman right side up.

DO IT BETTER

When you're sewing velvet, use a fine needle and thread, loosen tension, and increase the stitch length on your machine if it is catching.

OTTOMAN PATTERN

Enlarge the ottoman pattern to desired size, then cut velvet pieces as directed in how-to, making sure to allow for a 1.5cm seam allowance.



WALL FLOWERS

Gather your supplies

- Green velvet, pink velvet, yellow velvet
- Scissors
- Fabric glue
- Hot-glue gun and glue sticks
- Aluminium wire
- 50cm metal macrame ring







Here's how

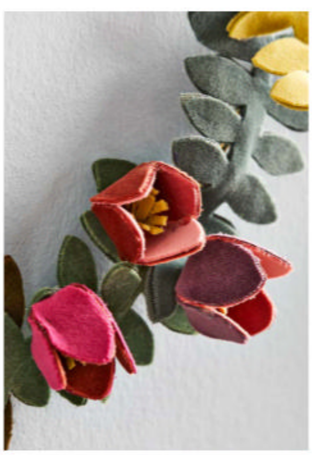
STEP 1 Print and cut out patterns (below). Trace leaves on the back of multiple shades of green velvet and cut out. Flip pattern and trace and cut a second set of leaves. With wrong sides together, pair leaves from first and second cutting.

STEP 2 Cut lengths of wire 5cm longer than a set of leaves. Sandwich wire between a set of leaves and use fabric glue on the back of the leaves to adhere the pieces. Repeat with all leaf sets and let dry.

STEP 3 Secure leaves around a 50cm metal macrame ring by twisting wire ends around the ring, overlapping and bending to the desired shape.

STEP 4 Trace flowers on the back of light pink velvet and cut out. Flip pattern and repeat tracing and cutting a second set of flowers on the back of darker pink velvet. Use fabric glue on the back of velvet to adhere light and dark flowers. Let dry, then pull up petals and hot-glue to create a 3D flower. Cut fringe from a strip of yellow velvet, roll up and hot-glue inside the flower. Hot-glue flowers around the wreath.

TONE-ON-TONE VELVET OFFERS SUBTLE IMPACT TO THE FLOWERS, AS DOES GROUPING THEM ON THE WREATH IN SETS OF TWO OR THREE.



THE VERY REASON YOU DON'T IRON VELVET (YOU'LL CRUSH THE PILE) IS WHAT MAKES THIS PROJECT POSSIBLE. HEAT FROM THE IRON CREATES THE IMPRINTED DESIGN.



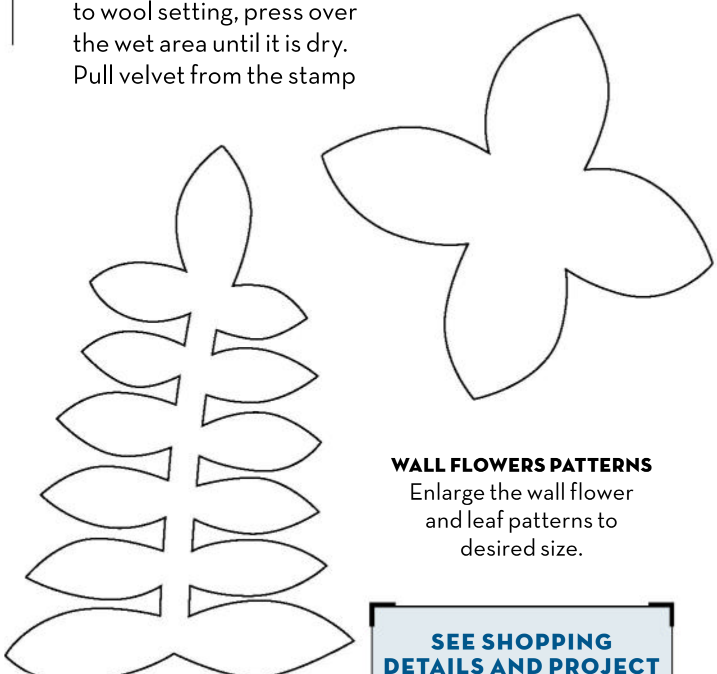
FIRST IMPRESSIONS

STEP 1 Cut two pieces of velvet to the size of your pillow form plus 1.5cm on all sides for seam allowance.

STEP 2 Spray water onto a rubber stamp and lay one piece of velvet facedown on top of wet stamp.

STEP 3 With iron heated to wool setting, press over the wet area until it is dry. Pull velvet from the stamp and repeat as desired to create the pillow front.

STEP 4 With right sides together, pin pillow front to pillow back and sew together, leaving an opening for turning. Trim excess fabric from corners, and turn right side out. Insert pillow form and whipstitch opening closed. ■



WALL FLOWERS PATTERNS
Enlarge the wall flower and leaf patterns to desired size.

SEE SHOPPING DETAILS AND PROJECT SUPPLIES ON P192.


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the fine. print WITH JULIET



Turn old book pages into an artsy picture. It's worth a thousand words and won't cost many notes.

Photography TIM ROBERTS *Styling* KATE WALSH

EASY STEPS TO CREATE A STAMPED ARTWORK

Gather your supplies

- Artist paper
- 2.4 metres 18 x 6mm half round dowel
- Screen printing ink
- Ink gel pad
- Ink pad rollers
- Cotton twine

You'll also need

Book; double-sided tape; scissors; a selection of leaves; small paintbrush; tape measure; pencil; hacksaw; clamps; drill and 2mm drill bit; sandpaper; PVA glue.

For the art

STEP 1 Choose nine pages from an old book. Attach 1cm strips of double-sided tape to each corner of the page's back (but don't remove tape backing yet).

STEP 2 With a paintbrush, apply an even layer of ink onto the ink gel pad. Place a leaf, face down, on the pad. Use the roller to gently roll over the back of the leaf to press it onto the ink.

STEP 3 Peel off the leaf and lay ink-side up on scrap paper. Place a book page, face down, on the leaf.

STEP 4 Use a clean, dry roller to roll over the page to stamp the leaf. Carefully remove the page to see your creation. Repeat these steps for the other pages.

For the frame

STEP 5 Measure and mark two lengths of dowel to your required length with a tape measure and pencil. Cut dowel with a hacksaw.

STEP 6 Clamp one length of dowel to the workbench, then measure 10 and 11cm from both ends. Drill two holes through the marked lines on both ends. Sand drill holes and sawn edges with sandpaper.

STEP 7 Thread string through the holes on the dowel and tie a double knot on the underside to act as a stopper when hung. Repeat at the other end to complete the hanger.

STEP 8 Apply a bead of PVA glue to the top of the artist paper. Attach the dowel with string to the glue line and press down. Repeat at the other end with the remaining piece of dowel. Allow glue to dry.

STEP 9 Arrange the stamped pages on the artist paper so they're equally spaced. Mark the pages' corner positions with a pencil. Take the backing off the double-sided tape and attach pages in their marked positions.



STEP 1



STEP 8

SEE SHOPPING DETAILS AND PROJECT SUPPLIES ON P192.

Project Karenza Jewell



Stamp pages of a novel using leaves with interesting shapes. You can contrast fern fronds with circular nasturtium or geranium leaves, pointy ivy and heart-shaped philodendron, creating a classy feature for your home. ■

JULIET LOVE
Join me as I show you how to make over your interiors on *BHG* TV, Fridays at 7pm on Channel 7.
(Apologies, may be subject to change.)
For more decorating, go to **BHG.COM.AU**

better health

[THE LATEST NEWS, PRODUCTS AND TRENDS WITH ANNIE MILLAR]



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REST AND RESTORE

A good night's sleep can leave you feeling refreshed and rejuvenated. Stress and Sleep Support by All Things Better is a powder with magnesium, ashwagandha, glycine and passionflower. Its makers say this mix can help support a healthy stress response in the body and improve sleep quality. Of course, always read the label and follow the directions for use. Stress and Sleep Support, $69 (330g), from **allthingsbetter.com**.

PLAY TIME

Science says being creative is good for you. A review of several studies, published in *Frontiers in Behavioral Neuroscience*, found that creative processes and emotional regulation use similar parts of the brain. That's maybe why therapies with music, art, singing or dancing help with emotional processing. Those good vibes kick in whenever you're immersed in the flow of a creative task, so dive in!

GOOD READS

NEW RULES



Goodbye Good Girl, Hello Me by Kasey Edwards (Penguin, $36.99) rewrites the rules for being a woman. It's tagged as a memoir, but many readers will recognise themselves in this tale. A researcher and author, Kasey has helped thousands of families raise kids to believe in themselves. But when she applied those lessons to her own life, she realised how she'd smothered her dreams. Scan the QR code to shop it now.



OF ONE MIND

PUSH FOR BETTER

Now, here's something to get you moving. The Push-Up Challenge is on from June 4–26. It's Australia's largest fitness event and raises funds for mental health programs. Participants take on 3,214 push-ups (or squats, sit-ups or steps) over 23 days. (Or you can aim for half that target.) That 3,214 represents the number of lives lost to suicide in Australia in 2023. This is a small but mighty way you can help bring that number down. For details, go to **thepushupchallenge.com.au**.

JUST MILK IT



Milk powder can be a cash-savvy alternative to expensive protein supplements if you want to build or retain muscle. It contains high-quality whey and casein proteins, which provide all the amino acids needed for muscle health and repair. It also has calcium, vitamin D and electrolytes. Just mix it into smoothies or use it in cooking. Try out the A2 Skim Milk Powder, $19 for 1kg, from Woolworths. ■

References: 1. Kaler J *et al. Cureus* 2023;15(3):e36342. **2.** Kodama F *et al. Infect Dis Clin North Am* 2017;31:767–90. **3.** Openshaw PJM *et al. Annu Rev Immunol* 2017;35:501–32. **4.** Reis J *et al. PLoS Comput Biol* 2016;12(10):e1005133. **5.** Otomaru H *et al. Am J Epidemiol* 2021;190:2536–43. **6.** Korsten K *et al. Eur Respir J* 2021;57(4): 2002688. **7.** Tseng HF *et al. J Infect Dis* 2020;222(8):1298–1310. **8.** Saravanos GL *et al. Med J Aust* 2019;210(10):447–53. **9.** Branche AR *et al. Clin Infect Dis* 2022;74(6):1004–11.



Do what comes *naturally*

Make your own affordable, nature-friendly concoctions to control weeds and bugs in your garden.

Get rid of uninvited guests in your garden without forking out for expensive potions that may cause long-term harm to your environment and your health.



EASY HOMEMADE HERBICIDES

SPLASH OF HEAT

Get rid of weeds coming through cracks in paths and decks by pouring boiling water over them. Avoid lawns or garden beds to protect beneficial micro-organisms in the soil.

BAKE IT IN

Baking soda also works on paths and decks. Sprinkle water over the area and dust with baking soda. Avoid garden beds and lawns as it can make the soil more alkaline.

SOUR GRAPES

Mix 1 litre white vinegar, ¼ cup salt and ½ teaspoon of organic liquid dishwashing soap in a spray bottle. In the early morning or late afternoon, spray directly on weeds using a jet nozzle. Don't overuse as the acid can affect soil. For lawn weeds, such as onion weed, apply with a paintbrush or rag.

NO MORE CLOVER

Clover grows in lawns that are lacking nitrogen. Feed your soil with a quality fertiliser high in nitrogen to re-energise your lawn and drive out clover.

ANAEMIC WEEDS

To get rid of broad-leafed weeds, including bindii and moss, mix 2 tablespoons of iron sulphate with 1 litre of water. Place in a spray bottle and spray weeds. While lawns cope with iron well, don't overuse it as it can make the soil acidic. Buy packets of iron sulphate from your local nursery or hardware store. Wear gloves and old clothes as it can stain skin and clothing.

PREVENTION TIP

Cover bare soil with mulch or ground covers. This helps deny weed seeds the light they need to germinate.

SIMPLE DIY INSECTICIDES

Sap-suckers such as aphids, scale and mealybugs slowly suck the sweet sap out of ornamentals and vegetables, weakening and killing them. You may find foliage covered with sooty mould, a fungal disease that grows from the residue left by these creatures. The mouldy 'honey dew' affects photosynthesis and the plants' ability to create energy. You'll also notice a proliferation of ants – they love the dew. Plants are vulnerable to this when they are overcrowded, get too much or not enough sun, and the soil is nutrient poor.

HOSE DOWN

For sturdy plants, turn your hose nozzle onto jet and give the plant – including the undersides of leaves – a strong blast.

LATHER IT UP

For aphids and mealybugs, make an insecticidal soap spray with 2 tablespoons of gentle laundry soap flakes in 1 litre water. You may need to spray a few times. To deal with hard-skinned scale, add ½ cup vegetable oil. Don't spray in hot weather.

ON THE ROCKS

If the infestation is mild, dab with cotton buds dipped into methylated spirits.

GOOD BUGS

Buy ladybirds online from Bugs for Bugs. They're voraciously carnivorous and love aphids, scale and mealybugs.

OTHER PEST SOLUTIONS

- **For slugs and snails,** scatter coffee grinds on the soil.
- Indoor plants can be afflicted by **spider mites.** Use insecticidal soap spray (see above) and increase the humidity around your plants by daily misting or placing a bowl of water nearby.
- **Fungus gnats** lay their eggs (up to 200 during their short lifespan) in damp potting mix and, as they mature, they feed on roots. Avoid overwatering your plants and trap the gnats with sticky traps. Make your own traps by spreading cards with engine oil, Vaseline, honey or a non-drying glue. ■



Photography Adobe Stock, Getty Images



Jenny Dillon
Garden editor

In your GARDEN

Celebrate the changing seasons, when leaves pick up a russet glow.

SEASON SPECIALS

It's autumn – time for spectacular colours.



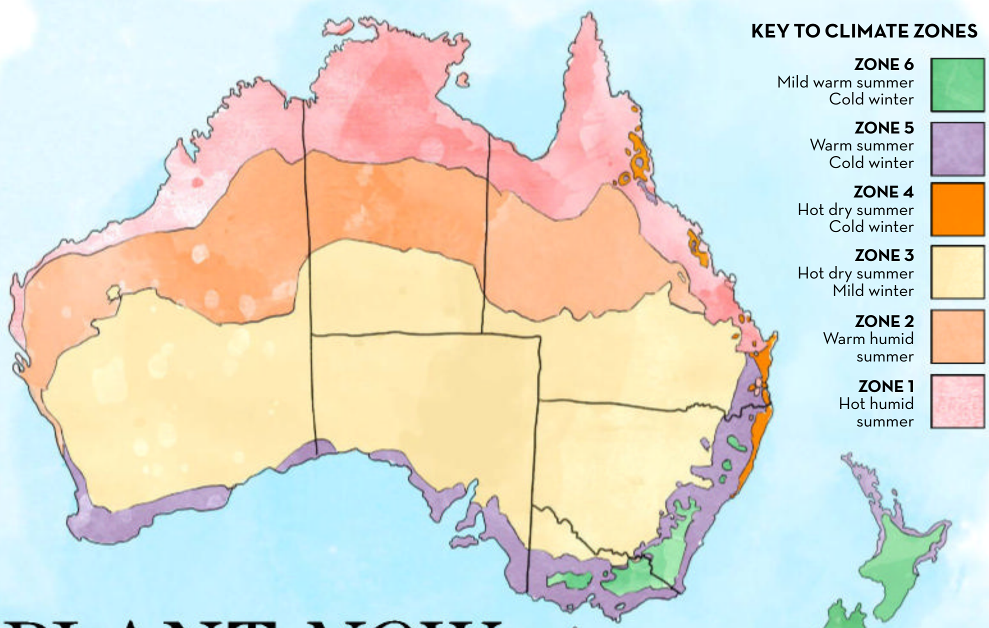
BE A FAN!
The leaves of the ginkgo tree start out rich green, then turn butter yellow.



PUPPY LOVE!
Foliage on the small dogwood tree becomes red, orange or purple.



STAYING POWER
Barberry leaves turn a radiant red, and can linger until midwinter.



PLANT *NOW*

In each issue, we give ideas, tips and planting advice for cooler, warmer, wetter and drier areas in each zone, so ask at your local nursery which zone best matches your conditions.





FLOWERS

ALL ZONES Cineraria, cornflower, lupin, pansy, poppy, primula and viola.
ZONES 1-3 Alyssum, cosmos, dianthus, marigold, nasturtium, petunia, salvia, snapdragon, sweetpea and torenia (top left).
ZONES 4-6 Anemone, calendula, linaria, nemesia, penstemon, ranunculus (bottom left) and wallflower.





VEGETABLES

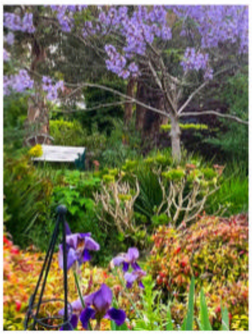
ALL ZONES Beetroot, broccoli, cauliflower, carrot, garlic, lettuce, onion, parsley, peas and radish (top left).
ZONES 1-3 Artichoke (globe), asparagus, capsicum, cucumber, parsnip, potato, pumpkin, corn (bottom left), tomato and zucchini.
ZONES 4-6 Artichoke (Jerusalem), brussels sprouts, leek and rocket.



CHRYSANTHEMUMS

> AUTUMN... THE YEAR'S LAST, LOVELIEST SMILE.

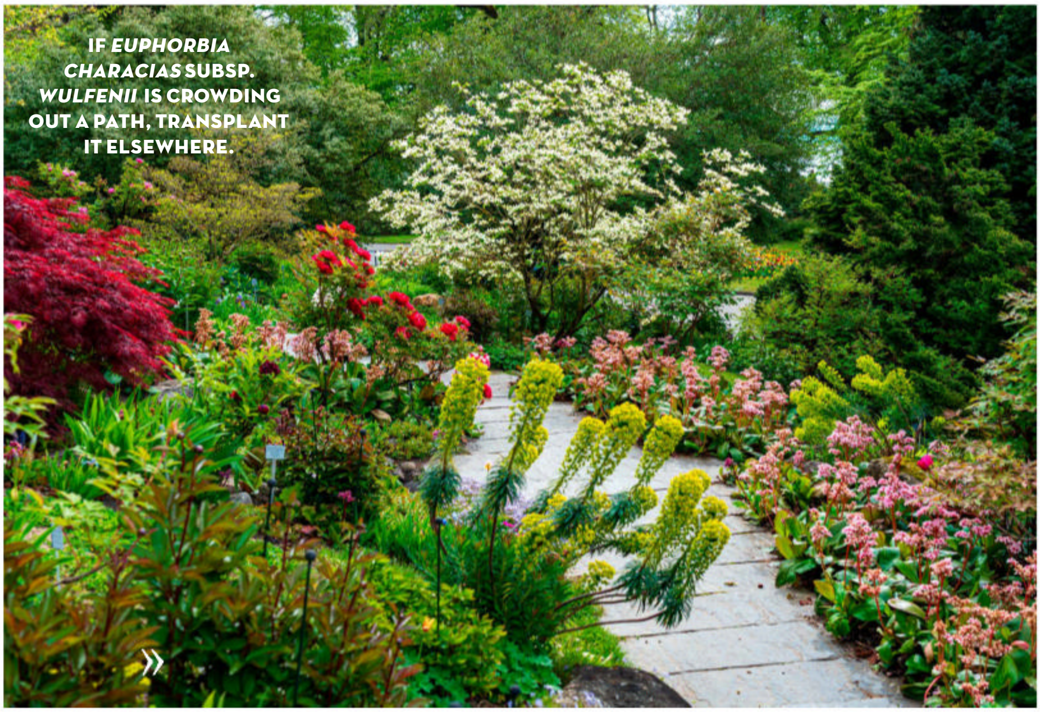
WILLIAM CULLEN BRYANT, AMERICAN POET AND JOURNALIST



TURBOCHARGED

SPEEDY PRINCESS

One of the fastest growing trees in the world, the princess or empress tree, *Paulownia tomentosa*, is making a comeback to Aussie gardens. Popular about four decades back, this deciduous beauty is covered with clusters of huge, purple blooms in summer. It's also fire retardant and provides good shade. The tree is native to east Asia, where its timber is used for furniture making, but it can become weedy in Australia. Keep it well corralled!



IF *EUPHORBIA CHARACIAS* SUBSP. *WULFENII* IS CROWDING OUT A PATH, TRANSPLANT IT ELSEWHERE.

GARDEN *SECRETS*

How to successfully move those ill-placed plants.

1

ON THE MOVE
Plants not performing or in the wrong spot? A move might solve things. Autumn's milder days are ideal for transplanting shrubs and even small trees.

2

CUT BACK
Easy movers are plants under five years, cacti, succulents such as euphorbias, cannas and grasses. Prune back by a third and keep as much rootball as possible.

3

TONIC TIME
With fickle Aussie natives, prepare planting spots in advance. Soak the surrounds and follow up with a seaweed tonic to reduce transplant shock.



CACTUS FLOWER

GARDENING ADVICE

◆ **CUT BACK** climbers that have become rampant. ◆ **DIVIDE** bearded iris and lift gladioli corms to store in a cool, dark place. ◆ **SPRAY** peach and nectarine trees with copper-based fungicide once leaves have fallen, to guard against leaf curl in spring. ◆ **TAKE CUTTINGS** of hydrangeas, fuchsias, roses and pelargoniums. ◆ **FERTILISE** lawns; sow any bare patches. ◆ **DIG IN** old organic mulches such as pea straw and lucerne to improve the soil's texture and water-holding capacity. ■

Photography Tony Fawcett, Adobe Stock



Milton Black
Astrologer

MOON guide

Garden according to the phases of the moon with Milton Black.



Milton's tips for Aries season

(March 21 to April 20)

Mars (spirited, courageous) rules Aries and gives lots of energy for gardening chores. Red represents action – perfect for Aries. With autumn beginning to show in cooler climates, now is the time to rejuvenate your garden. Extract all drooping old flowers and prune. Dig over the soil, add compost, fertilise and prepare for planting winter and spring flowers and vegetables. Aries should plant red chilli, beetroot, garlic, spring onions and strawberries plus red flower varieties such as anemone, zinnia, chrysanthemum and poppy. Now is the time to make your homemade jams and to bottle fruit, pickles and condiments.



ZODIAC SIGNS

The 12 signs of the zodiac are divided into four groups – fire, air, earth and water.

Fire signs
Aries and **Sagittarius** are in harmony with all fruit. **Leo** is in harmony with nuts and all seed-producing crops.

Earth signs
Capricorn and **Taurus** are in harmony with all root vegetables that produce crops below the ground, including garlic. **Virgo** is in harmony with all herbs.

Air signs
Libra, Aquarius and **Gemini** are in harmony with plants that produce flowers and perfumes.

Water signs
Cancer, Scorpio and **Pisces** are in harmony with above-ground crops, including trees, shrubs, lawns, and leafy, juicy and fleshy vegetables.

- ♈ Aries
- ♉ Taurus
- ♊ Gemini
- ♋ Cancer
- ♌ Leo
- ♍ Virgo
- ♎ Libra
- ♏ Scorpio
- ♐ Sagittarius
- ♑ Capricorn
- ♒ Aquarius
- ♓ Pisces

How to use the calendar

Best days (yellow)

Second-best days (red)

On these days, thin out seed boxes, sow seeds and plant seedlings that produce their crop above the ground.

These include peas, beans, corn, cabbage, cauliflower, broccoli, brussels sprouts, eggplant, lettuce, celery, silverbeet, spinach, endive, Chinese cabbage, tomato, cucumber, asparagus crowns, artichoke, marrow, pumpkin, capsicum, melon, zucchini, chicory, sprouts, rhubarb and herbs (except garlic).

You can also plant out flowering shrubs, annuals, flowers (not bulbs), cactus, tree ferns, flax, passionfruit vines and kiwifruit.

Plant fruit trees and trees that produce edible nuts, such as almond, macadamia, pecan and walnut. Grapes and banana can also be planted.

Take cuttings from established trees and shrubs, and propagate. This is also a good time for planting trees and climbers, and sowing new lawns.

Best days (green)

Second-best days (brown)

On these days, sow seeds and plant seedlings that grow their crops below ground, such as carrot, parsnip, radish, beetroot, onion, leek, swede, turnip, sweet potato, seed potato, yam, cassava, garlic and ginger.

This is a good time to plant flowering bulbs or bulbs for propagation and development rather than flowers. Also, plant bare-rooted trees to develop root growth, and refurbish established lawns.

(pink) A favourable time for transplanting all types of established trees, shrubs, ferns and bulbs.

(white) Weed and lightly feed. Water with seaweed-type products only.

(purple) Destroy or spray weeds, pests and noxious growth. Cut lawns, do heavy pruning and clear rubbish – don't plant or transplant anything.

Prepare soil and fertilise garden beds for future planting; spread and make compost. Feed all established plants, shrubs and lawns, then water in. This is the best time for dethatching or coring lawns.

(blue) Do not plant or transplant anything, as the moon is adversely aspected with the sun.

APRIL 2025

SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT
		1 ♉	**2** Moon enters Gemini 6.25am	**3** ♊	**4** Moon enters Cancer 8:49am	**5** Moon in Cancer 1st Qtr Moon 12:14pm
6 Moon enters Leo 2:34pm	**7** ♌	**8** Moon enters Virgo 11:39pm	**9** ♍	**10** ♍	**11** Moon enters Libra 11:11am	**12** ♎
13 Full Moon 10:22am Moon enters Scorpio 11:54pm	14 ♏	15 ♏	16 Moon enters Sagittarius 12:37pm	17 ♐	18 ♐	19 Moon enters Capricorn 12:12am
20 ♑	21 Moon enters Aquarius 9:21am Last Qtr Moon 11:35am	22 ♒	23 Moon enters Pisces 3:06pm	24 ♓	25 Moon enters Aries 5:23pm	26 ♈
27 Moon enters Taurus 5:16pm	**28** Moon in Taurus New Moon 5:31am	**29** Moon enters Gemini 4:34pm	**30** ♊			

1 Solid number means plant all **ABOVE**-ground crops during the moon's **WAXING** cycle.

1 Hollow number means plant all **BELOW**-ground crops during the moon's **WANING** cycle.

Times are in Australian Eastern Standard Time, AEST. This applies to NSW, the ACT, Qld, Vic and Tas. For SA and NT, deduct half an hour. For WA, deduct two hours. During Daylight Saving Time, add 1 hour. **Any questions?** Email milton@miltonblack.com.au ■

Photography Adobe Stock; illustration Getty Images

better gardening

[NEWS, PRODUCTS AND TRENDS]

SHOP NOW



CHAMELEON

From enchanting pastel pinks to gorgeous oranges and yellows, the French Delbard rose 'Montmartre' is a chameleon of a bloom, with no two exactly the same. Bred by Georges Delbard of the French rose-growing family and named after the artists' district that overlooks Paris, it grows 120cm tall x 75cm wide and has a delicate fragrance. Stockists at **wagnersrosenursery.com.au**.



BIRDWATCH

AVIAN AIRBASE

Encourage feathered friends to drop in by sprinkling seed in this bamboo fibre bird house by Annabel Trends, $29.95. It's about 18cm x 15cm and has its own rope for easy hanging. Best of all, it biodegrades at the end of its life.

FLOWER FEST

Bloom bounty

No matter the climate, armfuls of magnificent, perfumed flowers can be yours. Globe-trotting, English-trained farmer-florist Rebecca Starling joins Australia's Christine McCabe to reveal all in **Secrets from the Flower Farm** (Thames & Hudson, $59.99). It inspires and rewards with authoritative advice.





WHAT'S ON?

Green thumb magnet

South Australia's Clare Valley is a magnet for garden lovers on Sunday, April 6 at the SA Autumn Garden Festival. It has talks by celebrity gardeners, demonstrations, workshops, and advice on everything from 'starting your patch from scratch' to succulents, setting up wicking beds or caring for roses. Kids enjoy free fruit plus tips on scarecrow making. It's on at the Clare Showgrounds, 10am to 3pm – details at **saautumngardenfestival.com.au**. ■


WIN!
YOUR RENT OR MORTGAGE
PAID FOR A YEAR!
21
HOW WOULD YOU LIKE A BREAK FROM YOUR BIGGEST EXPENSE FOR A WHOLE YEAR?
Whether you own or rent, this incredible prize – worth $46,000, based on the national average yearly rent or mortgage repayment – could be a dream come true!
HOW TO ENTER:
Visit womensweekly.com.au/BIGwin or scan the QR code and complete the entry form.
Aus. & NZ res. 18+ only. Starts 30/12/24 12:01am AEDT. Ends 31/10/25 at 11:59 pm AEDT. Retain receipt(s)/invoice(s) & magazine title(s). Draw: 12:30pm AEDT, 5/11/25, at 5/9 Fitzpatrick Street, Revesby, NSW, 2212. Prize: AUD/NZD $46,356 (based on average yearly rent or mortgage repayment in Australia) (1 winner). Winner at Prizestolove.com.au/competitions by 7/11/25. Promoter: Are Media Pty Limited ABN 18 053 273 546, 54 Park Street, Sydney, NSW 2000, Australia. See Prizestolove.com.au/competitions for Terms and Conditions. NSW Authority No. TP/03786. Permit No's: ACT TP 24/02673 & SA T24/2047.

HOW TO change your money mood



Financial behaviour specialist Emma Edwards went from hot money mess to money-saving expert.

Words ANDREA BLACK

If you feel like money just slips through your fingers, Emma Edwards can relate. "I buried my head in the sand for so long, trying to pretend I was fine with being the hot money mess, and constantly scribbling out what I call a 'napkin budget' when I'm in financial chaos, deciding at 1am I'm going to fix everything overnight," she says.

But she took control of her money and continued to learn and develop her financial confidence. She's now a certified financial behaviour specialist, the author of *Good With Money* and host of *The Broke Generation* podcast.

By looking at the psychology behind a person's spending habits, Emma has developed a game-changing approach.

"There's a fairly common misconception that money is mathematical, so managing it should be as simple as one plus one equals two. But money management is all about human behaviour," she says.

"As humans, we're extremely emotional. We create meaning out of things that don't carry any meaning on their own – money is no exception. It's estimated that our core set of money beliefs form by the age of seven.

"Changing our money habits from the inside is about understanding ourselves and the things that drive our behaviour. Ultimately, that makes it easier to make better decisions with our money."

Emma believes you can change the way you feel about money – and how you manage it –without missing out on the things you love. Here she shares with BHG some effective tips to help you reclaim control.

Illustration Adobe Stock

1 UNDERSTAND YOUR PRIORITIES

First, "ask yourself what you think your priorities are when it comes to spending your money," says Emma. "You might say spending time with friends and family, travel, and saving a nest egg for the future." Then, compare what you thought with the actual transactions on your bank statements for a three-month period. "This shows you what you're actually prioritising – and it can be quite confronting!" says Emma.

2 Look at the story behind your buys

"Looking at not just the numbers, but the backstory is going to tell you a lot about your relationship with money," Emma explains. "Take three purchases you've made, and trace back to how that purchase came to happen." She encourages you to step back from post-purchase, then purchase, then lead-up. "What were the thoughts and emotions that led you to wanting to make that purchase?" This will reveal a lot about the emotions of your money habits.

3 GIVE YOUR PURCHASES A MARK OUT OF 10

Give your purchases a 'joy ranking'. "I get people to go through their transaction list and rank their spending out of 10 for how much joy or value it added to their life. This gives you a heatmap for how much value you're getting out of your financial behaviour," Emma says.

By ranking your purchases, this can help make a gradual change to your spending habits and drive more high-value decisions. For instance, you may think that new top gives you a quick hit of retail therapy joy but if it then sits barely used in your wardrobe, it's not adding the same value to your life as saving for a holiday.

4 Slow down and revel in a creative hobby

Not having time to think can fuel mindless spending, according to Emma. "Consumerism thrives when we're on that hamster wheel, never really able to come up for air. That keeps us spending on convenience; buying stuff and forgetting to return it, buying stuff after a bad day," she says.

An antidote? "Focusing on small ways we can create and sustain happiness without the need for more and more stuff," she suggests.

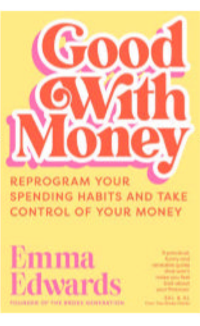
That means taking a break from screens and embracing creativity with art, sewing, gardening, crochet and knitting to "reclaim your interests, your desires and, really, your life," she says.

5 KEEP LITTLE TREATS IN YOUR BUDGET

Emma believes little treats can help you stay on track. "Getting good with money is, at its core, a behaviour change pursuit. And to change behaviour, we need motivation. Building little treats into your budget allows you to sustain motivation and create momentum, which is where the magic happens, when your past efforts start to make your future efforts easier. It also keeps you from tumbling into that binge-and-restrict cycle," says Emma. While it may be tempting to cut all non-essential spending, watch out for what Emma calls the "behavioural spring-back, where you binge-spend as a result of the pressure cooker you've put yourself in. Not only can this undo your progress, it can make it hard to get started again by creating a shame avoidance cycle."

STOP IMPULSE PURCHASING IN ITS TRACKS

Stores and devices are smarter than ever at tempting us with attractive but unnecessary buys. According to comparison website Finder, Australians spend $44 a week on impulse purchases on average – that adds up to $2,288 a year. "The rapid evolution of digital payments has made the distance between seeing something, wanting it and owning it dangerously short," says Emma. "How often have you seen something you think you really, really want, bought it, and then been bored of it a week or two later?" When Emma stopped buying clothes for a full year in 2023, she found she got much more creative with what she already owned. "It's actually a huge weight off your shoulders to not have to decide whether or not to buy something. We're bombarded with stuff all the time, so being able to see something and know I'm not going to buy it is a relief!" So, whether you're in store or online, stop, take a note of the price, and ask yourself if you really need it. ■



SCAN NOW

Get your own copy of *Good With Money* by Emma Edwards (Hachette, $34.99).

better finance

[ANDREA BLACK SHARES EASY WAYS TO CUT YOUR GROCERY (AND TAX!) BILLS]

Genius grocery hacks

Start shrinking your food bills today.

BUY RESCUED FRUIT AND VEG

Want to save on your fruit and vegies? Don't mind a few blemishes? Here's a genius idea. Farmers Pick works directly with producers to rescue the fruit and vegies big supermarkets reject. This produce may not pass the big shops' strict beauty or size standards, but it's decent quality and tastes fine. Farmers Pick delivers its fruit and vegie boxes direct to subscribers at prices up to 30 per cent less than the big supermarkets. Go to **farmerspick.com.au**

USE YOUR MEMBER DISCOUNTS

You can buy e-gift cards for the big supermarkets at a discount if you're a member of the RACV or NRMA. You can also get a discount if you're with health insurer HCF or a member of a union signed up to Union Shopper. Seniors Card holders can buy e-gift cards for less, too. Sure, the amount is a small percentage off, but it all adds up over time.

COLLECT & CONQUER

Sometimes smart planning can help you really save. Gather together a bunch of recipes that share some of the same ingredients (browse our food pages in *Better Homes and Gardens*), then buy those ingredients in bulk to create an array of dishes. Save the recipes together or just take a photo and store in an app such as Recipe Keeper. You can also make a habit of cooking up a double batch of food, then freezing half for later.



APPS TO HELP

Save dollars and cut food waste with these apps on the App Store and Google Play.

KITCHEN PAL

Track what's in your pantry with Kitchen Pal. You can also see expiry dates and get alerts to any items that need to be used as soon as possible.

TOO GOOD TO GO

Want restaurant quality food while saving the planet? Too Good To Go is a free mobile marketplace where retailers, restaurants, bakeries and cafes can sell their surplus food in Surprise Bags for less than retail. It's a win-win for all.

HALF PRICE

You'll see the latest half-price specials from Coles and Woolworths listed on the free Half Price app, with data refreshed every Wednesday. Let it guide your weekly shop.

Double-bang for your buck

You can spend money in a way that reduces your tax bill, too. Donating to a charity each month is unlikely to put a big dent in your budget, but it can add up to a useful tax deduction at the end of the financial year. In Australia, any donations over $2 to a registered deductible gift recipient (a charity or other organisation) can be claimed on your tax. It doesn't have to be much – The Smith Family, for example, is happy for a monthly donation of $20. It's put towards tutoring support and laptops for disadvantaged students. So you'd be helping bridge the digital divide, while claiming $240 back on your tax. See **thesmithfamily.com.au**. ■

This financial information is general in nature and does not take into consideration your personal circumstances. If you need advice, please seek out a licensed financial adviser.

Photography Adobe Stock

Paws & relax

Stitch a pooch-perfect dog bed for your favourite snuggle bug.

EASY STEPS TO A DOG BED

This easy DIY dog bed can be made to suit your budget and your decor.

Gather your supplies

To make a finished 47 x 67cm cushion:

- 50cm to 1 metre each of two coordinating 112cm wide cotton drill fabrics (you could also use rigid denim, cotton ticking or canvas)
- 20cm length of 50mm wide webbing
- Sewing machine and thread
- Ruler and marking pencil
- Iron and ironing board
- 2 bed pillows, towels or a blanket for stuffing.

Here's how

STEP 1 Cut one piece of fabric for the top of the bed to 50 x 70cm. Cut two pieces of fabric for the bottom of the bed to 50 x 48cm each. For the edge of the bed, cut three 10 x 85cm pieces across the fabric. (If it's simpler, just cut three 10cm wide strips across


STEP 2A


STEP 2B

your fabric's width.) Cut a 20cm length of webbing.

STEP 2 On one short end of both bottom pieces, fold up 1.5cm, press, then fold again, press and hem (each piece should now measure 50 x 45cm). Lay the two bottom pieces of fabric on top of the


STEP 3


STEP 4A

top piece, lining up the outer edges so the two hemmed edges overlap in the centre. Pin the overlap at the raw edges and stitch the sides where the two pinned pieces overlap to create a single bottom piece. (The opening in the centre allows you to insert the stuffing.) Be sure to stitch forward, reverse, and forward again at each start and stop.

STEP 3 Pin the ends of the edge pieces together at the short ends to make one long strip, matching the pattern if needed, and stitch.

STEP 4 With right sides together and starting at a corner, pin the long edge of the edge piece to the top piece, aligning the edges. Stitch 1.5cm from the raw edges, pivoting at the corners. At the final corner, cut away the excess of the edge piece, stitch the short ends of the edge together, and finish stitching the edge to the top piece.

DO IT BETTER

Don't toss out your old bed pillows, towels, blankets and other soft items. Upcycle them as stuffing for a dog bed. Your pup will gladly cosy up on a fluffy spot that already smells like you and your home.

Words and Project LACEY HOWARD + SONJA CARMON *Photography* MARTY BALDWIN






STEP 4B


STEP 5A


STEP 5B


STEP 6A


STEP 6B

STEP 5 Find the centre on one long side of the edge piece. Measure, mark and pin the webbing as a handle, folding in each end about 2.5cm. Topstitch the ends in place as shown.

STEP 6 Lay the bottom assembly on your work surface, right side up, and then arrange the top and edge pieces so you can mark places on the edge piece where it will meet the corners of the bottom piece (we cut tiny arrows). Make a 45-degree fold in the edge piece at each corner. Pin and stitch the bottom to the edge with a 1.5cm seam. Turn the project right side out and press the edges. Topstitch the perimeter of the top and bottom with a 1.5cm seam to form the flange. Insert pillows, towels or a blanket through the envelope opening on the bottom. ■

SEE SHOPPING DETAILS AND PROJECT SUPPLIES ON P192.


WOMEN'S AND GIRLS' EMERGENCY CENTRE
x stella
SWITCH TO STELLA AND DRIVE CHANGE
Stella donates $5 from every new car insurance policy to support women and children in need and help put an end to gender-based violence in Australia.
Car Insurance that's committed to supporting women.
Get a quick quote
Stella Insurance

better pets

[CAROLINE ZAMBRANO'S PET FRIENDS WON'T RUFFLE YOUR BUDGET]



SQUEAK EASY!

Affordable care for your mouse and its house.



Mice are playful creatures who can live their best lives without breaking the bank.

HOME SWEET HOME

Check out second-hand cages online; they're often a fraction of the price of a new cage. Give the cage a good scrub with warm (unscented) soapy water first, then sanitise it. To do this, spray on a solution of ½ teaspoon of chlorine bleach in 1 litre of COLD water – it shouldn't smell 'bleachy' – then let it air dry. Vets and pet stores also have mouse-safe disinfectants. For regular cleaning, wipe with a solution of two parts hot water to one part vinegar.

BEDDING AND NESTING

Mice love to burrow, so provide thick bedding. Shredded paper or pelleted recycled paper is cost-effective and safe. Change it regularly.

FRESH WATER

Provide your mice with clean, fresh water at all times. Drip-style water bottles are ideal.

FEEDING TIME

Mice thrive on a varied diet. You can feed them commercial mouse pellets or blocks (look for at least 16% protein and 4–5% fat). Also provide fresh fruit and vegies such as apples, carrots or broccoli – but avoid citrus, fruit pits and seeds.

CHEWING TIME

Mice need to chew and will gnaw constantly to keep their incisors the right length. Offer safe chew toys or small pieces of wholegrain cereal or cooked rice.

PLAYTIME AND STIMULATION

Set up a playground with cardboard tubes, small boxes and an exercise wheel. And adopt more than one mouse – they're social critters! Speak with an exotics vet for more info.

BUDGET TIPS FOR THE BIRDS

Make your bird's life the tweet-est possible.

- **DIY playtime:** Birds love to stay active, but you can skip costly toys and repurpose household items. Fill cardboard rolls and paper cups with healthy snacks for foraging and exploration. String fresh vegies or fruit on a bamboo skewer for a tasty hanging toy! And add a shallow dish of water so your bird can enjoy a budget spa day.
- **Feeding time:** There are lots of affordable, nutritious treats you can buy for birds, but you could cut some costs by growing a small garden or using leftover kitchen scraps, such as spinach and grapes (just avoid fruit pits and apple or pear seeds). When in doubt, wing it to an avian vet!
- **Upcycled perches:** Natural wood branches from bird-safe trees such as eucalyptus or bottlebrush make excellent perches. Simply rinse the branch with soap and warm water, soak it in a solution of equal parts water and white vinegar for 15 minutes to kill bacteria and pests, and air dry in a sunny spot or with a clean towel. ■

SCAN ME
After a low-maintenance pet? Scan this QR code to discover companions perfect for busy people.

Photography Adobe Stock, Getty Images


RSPCA
Ollie
BE A HERO FOR ANIMALS IN NEED.
Give animals like Ollie the means to receive essential care and help them live a life they deserve.
Visit donate.rspca.org.au
Donate today.
Scan to donate



HOOKED-ON POT PLANTS

Crochet your own indoor plants! They're the ultimate in no-maintenance greenery.

CROCHET ABBREVIATIONS

approx = approximately; **beg** = begin/ning; **ch** = chain; **cont** = continue; **dc** = double crochet; **dtr** = double treble; **foll/s** = follows/ following; **foundation ch** = length of ch at beg to work sts into; **htr** = half treble; **lp** = loop/s; **patt** = pattern; **rep** = repeat/ ing; **sl st** = slip stitch; **sp/s** = space/s; **st/s** = stitch/es; **tog** = together; **tr** = treble; **turning ch** = 1 or more ch worked at beginning of a row or round; **yoh** = yarn over hook.

BEFORE YOU START

• Quantities and project measurements are approximate. These projects have been designed for the yarns specified in the patterns. Other yarns are likely to produce different results.

• Check ball bands to ensure all yarn of same colour is from the same dye lot, and for care instructions.

• Don't press projects when done, unless otherwise specified.

• Australian abbreviations are used throughout instructions.



CHAIN OF HEARTS

Skill Intermediate crochet

Measurements
Length (approx) 30–60cm

PATONS TOTEM MERINO 8 ply 50g balls
1 ball each: Catkin Green (4429), Green (4407) and Zenith Rose (4437)
Use only the yarn specified. Other yarns are likely to produce different results.

Hook and extras
• 3.5mm crochet hook
• 13cm diameter pot and washed stones for display
• wool needle for finishing.

Tension
Correct tension is not essential.



Special abbreviations

Heart = Miss 3ch, (2tr, 3htr, 1ch, 1tr, 1ch, 3htr, 3tr, sl st) in 4th ch from hook.

Chain of hearts

(Make as many as desired or until the end of balls of Green and Catkin Green)
Use 3.5mm hook and Green or Catkin Green make 12ch.

Begin heart

NOTE – Each chain length may be made different to imitate a plant (working various number of ch at beg, end or between each heart). Work edging onto one third of heart chain lengths.
1st row – * **Heart**, 12ch, rep from * until length desired, make 22ch. Fasten off.

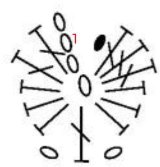
Edging

Join Zenith Rose with a sl st in one lp of first ch at beg.
1st row – * Sl st in one lp of each ch to heart, 2ch (across back of heart), sl st in back lp of each st of heart, sl st in first of these sl sts, rep from * to end, sl st in one lp of each ch to end. Fasten off.

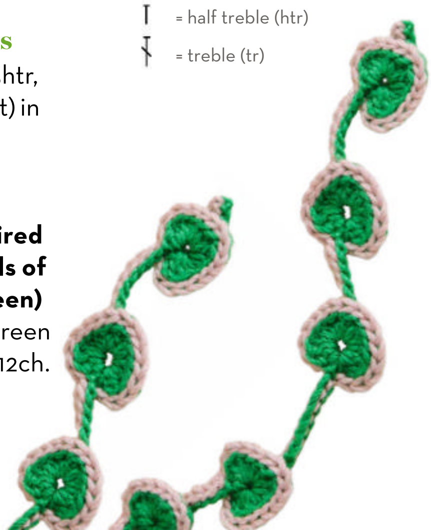
To make up

Place in pot, using stones to hold them in.

HEART



KEY
• = slip stitch (sl st)
○ = chain (ch)
T = half treble (htr)
ŧ = treble (tr)





PEACOCK PLANT

Skill Intermediate crochet

Measurements
Small leaf length (approx) 11cm
Large leaf length (approx) 14cm

PATONS COTTON BLEND 8 ply 50g balls
1st colour (**C1** – 53 Daylily) 2
2nd colour (**C2** – 42 Rainforest) 2
Use only the yarn specified. Other yarns are likely to produce different results. Quantities are approximate as they can vary between crocheters. Ensure all yarn of the same colour is from the same dye lot.

Hook and extras
- 3.5mm crochet hook
- 16cm diameter pot and washed stones for display
- floristry wire
- wool needle for finishing.

Tension
Correct tension is not essential.

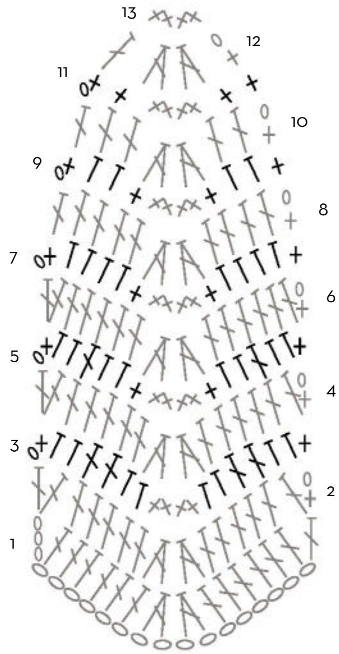
Special abbreviations

tr2tog = treble 2 together decrease – * Yoh, insert hook in next st, yoh and draw lp through, yoh and draw through 2 lps on hook, rep from * once, yoh and draw through all 3 lps on hook.
dc2tog = double crochet 2 together decrease – * Insert hook in next st, yoh and draw lp through, rep * once, yoh and draw through all 3 lps on hook.

Large leaf (Make 6)

Using 3.5mm hook and **C1**, make 19ch. Work from diagram or written instructions as folls –
1st row (wrong side) – Miss 3ch, 1tr in each of next 6ch, (**tr2tog**) twice, 1tr in each of next 5ch, 2tr in last ch ... 16 sts.
NOTE – When changing colour, work in current colour until final yoh, then use new colour to complete st. (See diagram on p181.)
2nd row – (1dc, 1ch, 1tr) in first tr, 1tr in each of next 5tr, (**tr2tog**) twice, 1tr in each of next 5tr, 2tr in turning ch.
Using **C2** (working over **C1** – see diagram on p181),
3rd row – 1ch, (1dc, 1htr) in first tr, 1htr in next tr, 1tr in each of next 2tr, 1htr in each of next 2tr, using **C1** (working over **C2**) (**dc2tog**) twice, using **C2** (working over **C1**) 1htr in each of next 2tr, 1tr in each of next 2tr, 1htr in next tr, (1htr, 1dc) in turning ch.
Using **C1** (working over **C2**),
4th row – (1dc, 1ch, 1tr) in first dc, 1tr in each of next 5 sts, (**tr2tog**) twice, 1tr in each of next 5 sts, 2tr in turning ch.
Using **C2** (working over **C1**),
5th row – 1ch, (1dc, 1htr) in first tr, 1htr in next tr, 1tr in next tr, 1htr in each of next 2tr, 1dc in next tr, using **C1** (working over **C2**) (**dc2tog**) twice, using **C2** (working over **C1**) 1dc in next tr, 1htr in each of next 2tr, 1tr in next tr, 1htr in next tr, (1htr, 1dc) in turning ch.
Using **C1** (working over **C2**),
6th row – As 4th row.
Using **C2** (working over **C1**),
7th row – 1ch, 1dc in first tr, 1htr in each of next 4tr, 1dc in next tr, using **C1** (working over **C2**) (**dc2tog**) twice, using **C2** (working over **C1**) 1dc in next tr, 1htr in each of next 4tr, 1dc in turning ch ... 14 sts.
Using **C1** (working over **C2**),
8th row – (1dc, 1ch) in first dc, 1tr in each of next 4 sts, (**tr2tog**) twice, 1tr in each of last 5 sts ... 12 sts.
Using **C2** (working over **C1**),
9th row – 1ch, 1dc in first tr, 1htr in each of next 2tr, 1dc in next tr, using **C1** (working over **C2**) (**dc2tog**) twice, using **C2** (working over **C1**) 1dc in next tr, 1htr in each of next 2tr, 1dc in turning ch ... 10 sts.
Using **C1** (working over **C2**),
10th row – (1dc, 1ch) in first dc, 1tr in each of next 2 sts, (**tr2tog**) twice, 1tr in each of last 3 sts ... 8 sts.
Using **C2** (working over **C1**),
11th row – 1ch, 1dc in each of first 2tr, using **C1** (working over **C2**) (**dc2tog**) twice, using **C2** (working over **C1**) 1dc in each of last 2 sts ... 6 sts.
Using **C1**, **12th row** – (1dc, 1ch) in first dc, (**tr2tog**) twice, 1tr in last dc ... 4 sts.
13th row – (**Dc2tog**) twice, **turn**.
**** Next round** – Cont with **C1**, work 1 round of dc evenly around edge, sl st in first dc.
Fasten off.

LARGE LEAF





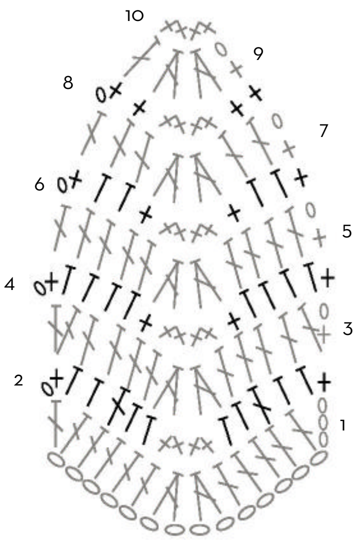
KEY
- ○ = chain (ch)
- + = double crochet (dc)
- ⨯⨯ = double crochet 2 together (**dc2tog**)
- T = half treble (htr)
- ǂ = treble (tr)
- Λ = treble 2 together (**tr2tog**)
- — = **C1** – Daylily
- — = **C2** – Rainforest

Border

With right side facing and using 3.5mm hook, join **C2** with a sl st at centre of foundation ch. Work sl sts loosely in back lp of each dc to beg, sl st in same st as first sl st, do not fasten off.



SMALL LEAF



KEY

- = chain (ch)
- = double crochet (dc)
- = double crochet 2 together (**dc2tog**)
- = half treble (htr)
- = treble (tr)
- = treble 2 together (**tr2tog**)
- = **C1** – Daylily
- = **C2**– Rainforest

Assembly

Weave floristry wire lengthwise through the centre of the leaf, bending the top end over and securing to the point of the leaf. Using the attached **C2**, work dc over the wire to end. Fasten off, wrapping the tail end and stitch to secure.

Small leaf **(Make 6)**

Using 3.5mm hook and **C1**, make 17ch.
Work from diagram or the written instructions as folls –
1st row (right side) – Miss 3ch, 1tr in each of next 5ch, (**tr2tog**) twice, 1tr in each of next 4ch, 2tr in last ch ... 14 sts.
Using **C2** (working over **C1**), **2nd row** – 1ch, (1dc, 1htr) in first tr, 1htr in next tr, 1tr in next tr, 1htr in each of next 2tr, using **C1** (working over **C2**) (**dc2tog**) twice, using **C2** (working over **C1**) 1htr in each of next 2tr, 1tr in next tr, 1htr in next tr, (1htr, 1dc) in turning ch.
Using **C1** (working over **C2**), **3rd row** – (1dc, 1ch, 1tr) in first dc, 1tr in each of next 4 sts, (**tr2tog**) twice, 1tr in each of next 4 sts, 2tr in turning ch.
Using **C2** (working over **C1**), **4th row** – 1ch, (1dc, 1htr) in first tr, 1htr in each of next 3tr, 1dc in next tr, using **C1** (working over **C2**) (**dc2tog**) twice, using **C2** (working over **C1**) 1dc in next tr, 1htr in each of next 3tr, (1htr, 1dc) in turning ch.
Using **C1** (working over **C2**), **5th row** – (1dc, 1ch) in first dc, 1tr in each of next 4 sts, (**tr2tog**) twice, 1tr in each of last 5 sts ... 12 sts.
Using **C2** (working over **C1**), **6th row** – 1ch, 1dc in first tr, 1htr in each of next 2tr, 1dc in next tr, using **C1** (working over **C2**) (**dc2tog**) twice, using **C2** (working over **C1**) 1dc in next tr, 1htr in each of next 2tr, 1dc in turning ch ... 10 sts.
Using **C1** (working over **C2**), **7th row** – (1dc, 1ch) in first dc, 1tr in each of next 2 sts, (**tr2tog**) twice, 1tr in each of last 3 sts ... 8 sts.
Using **C2** (working over **C1**), **8th row** – 1ch, 1dc in each of first 2tr, using **C1** (working over **C2**) (**dc2tog**) twice, using **C2** (working over **C1**) 1dc in each of last 2 sts ... 6 sts.
Using **C1**, **9th row** – (1dc, 1ch) in first dc, (**tr2tog**) twice, 1tr in last dc ... 4 sts.
10th row – (**Dc2tog**) twice, **turn**.
Complete as for large leaf from ** to end.

To make up

Place wire ends in pot, using stones to hold them in.



STRING OF PEARLS

Skill Intermediate crochet

Measurements
Length (approx) 30-60cm

PATONS TOTEM MERINO 8 ply 50g balls
Catkin Green (4429) 2
Cream (0100) small quantity
Sweet Lavender (4434) small quantity

Use only the yarn specified. Other yarns are likely to produce different results.

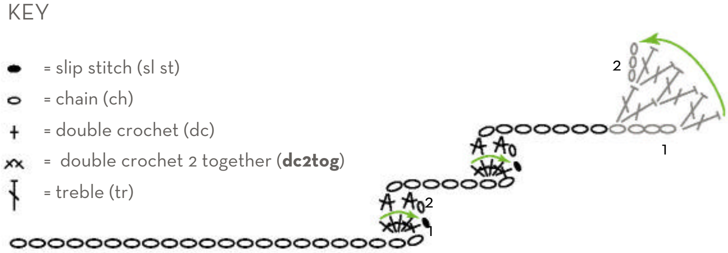
Hook and extras
- 3.5mm crochet hook
- 13cm diameter pot and washed stones for display
- wool needle for finishing.

Tension
Correct tension is not essential.

STRING OF PEARLS

KEY

- = slip stitch (sl st)
- = chain (ch)
- = double crochet (dc)
- = double crochet 2 together (**dc2tog**)
- = treble (tr)



Special abbreviation

dc2tog = double crochet 2 together decrease –
* Insert hook in next st, yoh and draw lp through, rep from * once, yoh and draw through all 3 lps on hook.

String of pearls

(Make as many as desired or until the end of the 2nd ball of Catkin Green)
Using 3.5mm hook and Catkin Green, make 22ch.

Begin pearl

NOTE – Each string length may be made different to imitate a plant (working various number of ch at beg, end or between each pearl). Place a flower at end of 10 strings.

1st row – Miss 1ch, 5dc in 2nd ch from hook, sl st in first dc.
2nd row – 1ch, (**dc2tog**) twice, make 14ch.
Rep 1st and 2nd rows until String is length desired.
NOTE – When changing colour, work in current colour until final yoh, then use new colour to complete st (see diagram bottom right).

Fasten off or work flower as folls –

Flower

Using Sweet Lavender,
1st row – 4ch, miss 3ch, 2tr in next ch.
Using Cream, **2nd row** – 3ch, 2tr in each of next 2tr, 2tr in turning ch, remove hook from lp, insert hook in 3rd ch at beg, replace lp on hook and draw through. Fasten off.

To make up

Flower embroidery

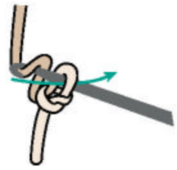
Using approx 30cm length of Sweet Lavender, embroider 4 or 5 loops through the Cream flower head.
Knot all ends together at base of flower and thread into centre, sewing ends securely in place. Cut embroidered loops.

Assembly

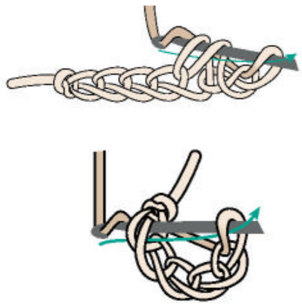
Place in pot, using stones to hold them in. ■



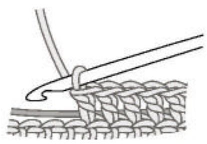
CHAIN (CH)



SLIP STITCH (SS)



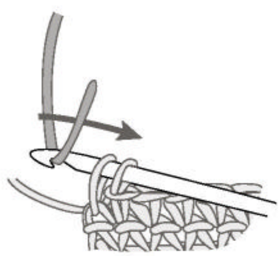
WORKING OVER YARN OR LONG END



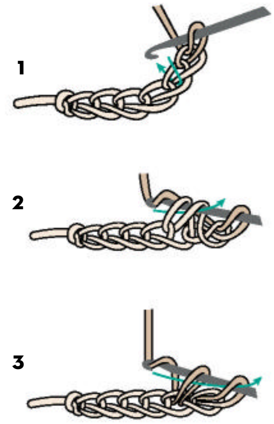
Yarn to be worked over sits on top of the stitches or ring being worked into.

CHANGING COLOUR IN CROCHET

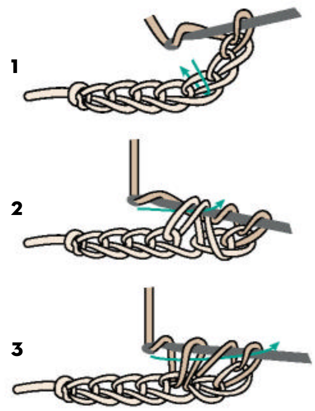
When changing colour, work in the old colour until the final yarn over hook step of the last stitch remains. Use the new colour to complete the stitch.



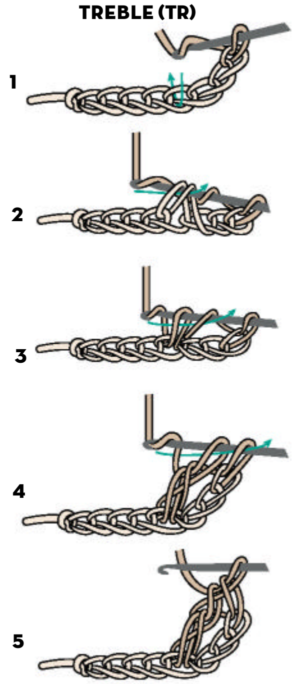
DOUBLE CROCHET (DC)



HALF TREBLE (HTR)



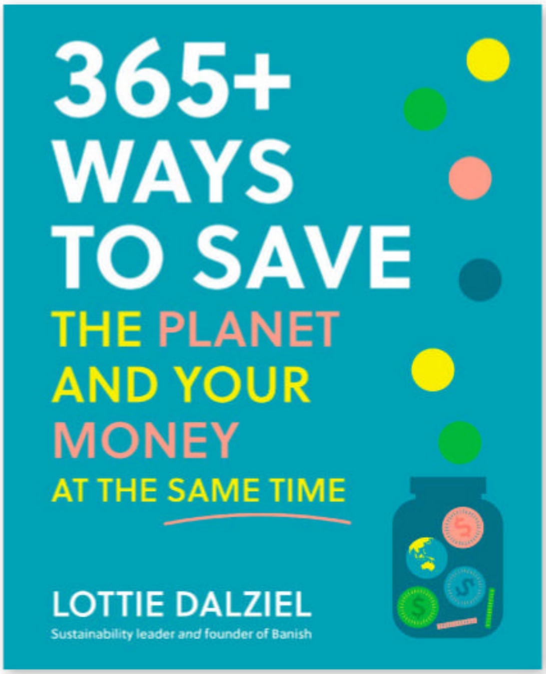
TREBLE (TR)



better books

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TOP READ

365+ WAYS TO SAVE THE PLANET AND YOUR MONEY AT THE SAME TIME

Lottie Dalziel (Murdoch Books, $34.99)

I was a bit apprehensive when opening this book - my shopping habits definitely do not equate to a sustainable lifestyle. But I was pleasantly surprised by the casual and cheerful messages from Lottie Dalziel. Looking at plastics, grocery shopping and all things recycling, she takes you through each section of the household without pushing you into unrealistic changes.

This is like a book of knowledge – from staying waste-free in the fridge to knowing what brands to trust and which to avoid. Learning to shop my own closet, and which farming industry is the most harmful for the environment, has helped me be more thoughtful about my purchases.

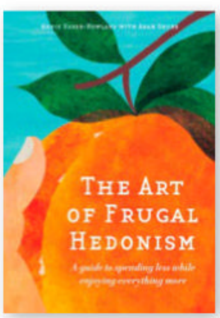
If you're not one to stop and think, 'Have I already got this at home?', then you need to flip through this book. My favourite lesson learnt? There's much more to sustainability than 'reduce, reuse, recycle'.

> "IF TALKING TRASH WAS AN OLYMPIC SPORT, LOTTIE DALZIEL WOULD BE BRINGING HOME THE GOLD."
>
> *MARIE CLAIRE* MAGAZINE

MAKES YOU THINK

THE ART OF FRUGAL HEDONISM

Annie Raser-Rowland, Adam Grubb (Melliodora Publishing, $32.95)

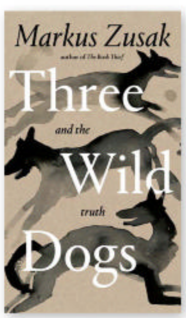


Although the money-saving ideas in this book aren't exactly novel, the angle taken by Raser-Rowland and Grubb makes for a great read. Focusing on the magic moments in life, and how to best extend them, this pair make spending little an act of artistry.

THE COMFORT READ

THREE WILD DOGS AND THE TRUTH

Marcus Zusak (Picador Australia, $36.99)

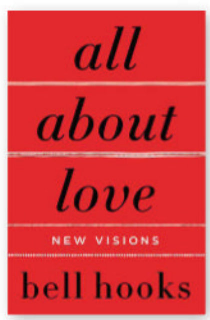


In need of a warm hug of a book? Pick up Markus Zusak's memoir about adopting three rambunctious and troublesome rescue dogs – Reuben, Archer and Frosty. You'll be caught up in the joy, the love and the frustrations that sharing your life with furry companions bring.

THE CLASSIC CHOICE

ALL ABOUT LOVE

Bell Hooks (HarperCollins, $27.99)



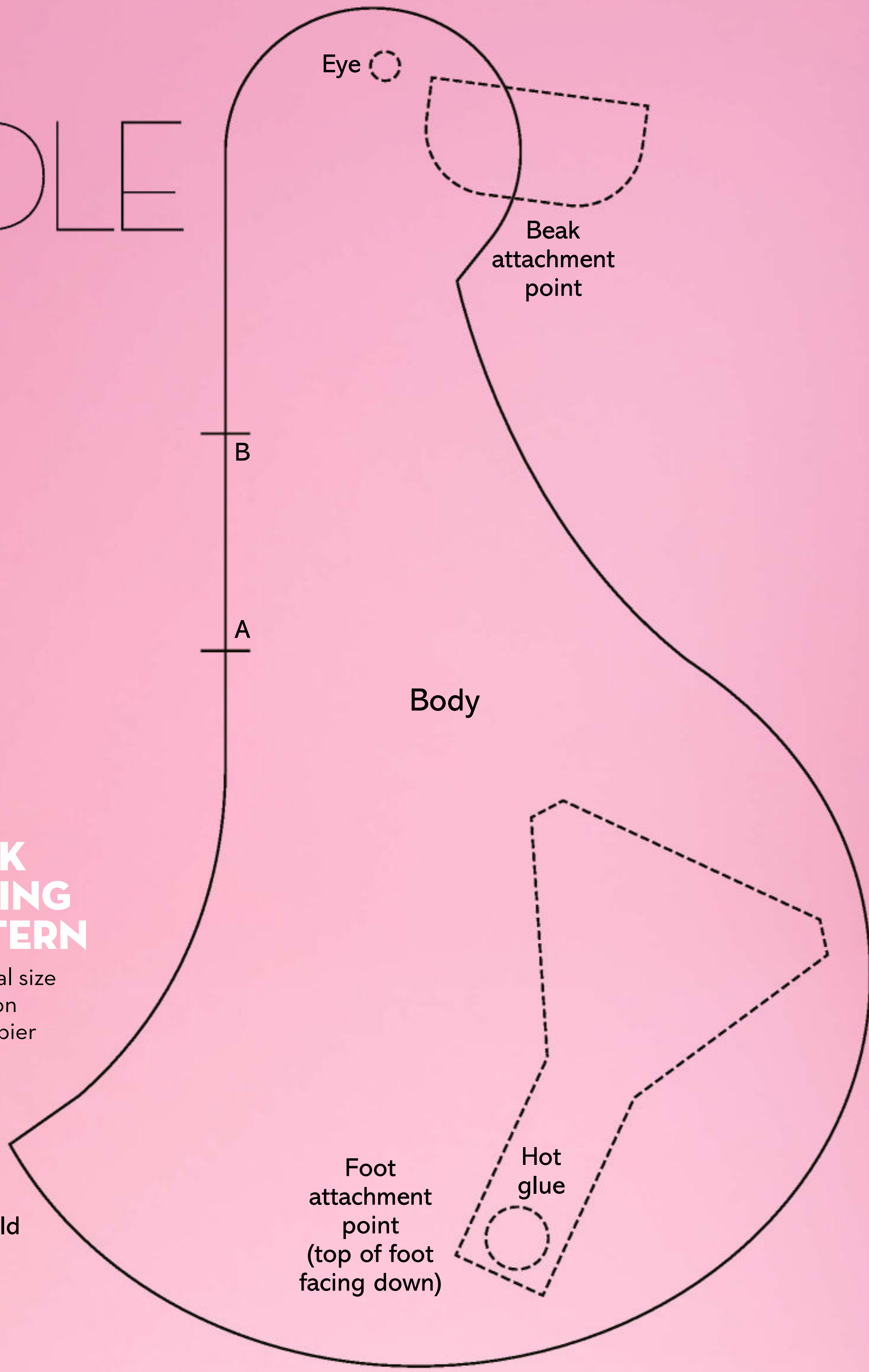
What is love? Feminist writer Bell Hooks thinks it's better defined as a verb than a noun; an act of compassion and unity rather than romance. Examining the truth about love and society's role in shaping it, Hooks shows how love is able to change hearts and minds for the better.

Prices are approximate and a guide only.

WADDLE THIS WAY

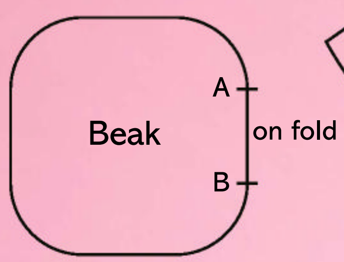
See page 144 for how to make a duck doorstop.





DUCK SEWING PATTERN

For actual size enlarge on photocopier by 34%





BETTER SHOPPING

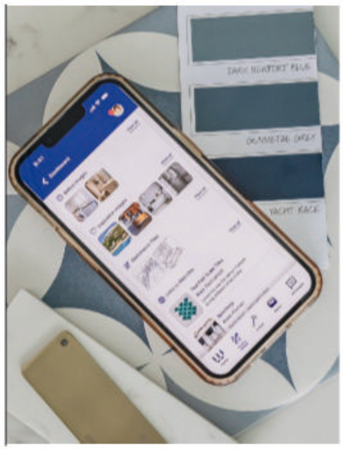
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ALL TOGETHER

Pet-friendly flooring doesn't mean giving up on great style. UltraPet Designer Hybrid Flooring offers unbeatable durability and elegance, redefining pet-friendly living for you and your furry family. It is scratch and odour resistant and available for $63 per square metre.

carpetcourt.com.au



RENO WHIZZ

Manage your renovation project like a pro with the new Witzer app. It helps to keep all of the essential information for your renovation in one place. You can plan your project, track progress with your tradie and even manage funds. It is available from the App Store and Google Play.

witzer.com.au

MAJESTIC PEAKS

This exclusive 15-day tour offers a slow-paced exploration of Italy's majestic Dolomites, the picturesque Prosecco Hills, and serene Lake Garda. Savour local culture and cuisine, while enjoying the breathtaking scenery from $10,370 per person in August and September 2025.

italiantours.com.au



RIDING WAVES

Designed and made in Australia, Stormtech's award-winning Wave Grate is an integrated drainage solution for bathrooms. Its innovative wave profile combines a high-flow channel for water removal with a grate surface that is easy to clean.

stormtech.com.au





BUDDING BEAUTY

If you're looking to plant bare-root roses in your garden this winter, then it's officially time to order your blooms in preparation. Choose from beautiful 2025 new releases and over 600 varieties of bushes, climbers and standards, all perfect for any garden.

wagnersrosenursery.com.au



TAKE THE FLOOR

Satin Seas is a new cloud-soft carpet from Choices Flooring you can use throughout your home. This twisted cut pile offers a durable, textured finish. It's ideal for busy areas with high foot traffic and is stain and fade resistant. This is all wrapped up with a cushioned underfoot feel.

choicesflooring.com.au

TOP PICKS

CHECK OUT OUR PICKS OF THE MONTH TO SEE WHAT'S NEW, WHAT'S HOT AND WHAT'S IN STORE NOW!

CUTTING EDGE

EverEdge flexible steel garden edging lets you control grass runners with ease. EverEdge permanently separates any two elements in the garden. It's simple to install as it has no extra pins or joiners. It easily bends to form any curve or angle.

everedge.com.au





PLEASURE CRAFT

Established in 2012, The Yarn Store Darling Downs is a family-run online treasure trove for yarn lovers. Based in Brisbane, it offers fabulous yarn, patterns and accessories at amazing prices. Whether you knit or crochet, you'll love the collection of top brands like Patons, Heirloom, Sirdar, KnitPro, Cleckheaton and Fiddlesticks.

theyarnstore.com.au

VERY VERSATILE

Aussie Shade and Hot Houses can help you year-round, beating the harsh summer heat and winter frosts. The Aussie-owned company is a leader in quality shade and hot houses (also known as greenhouses). Its frames are easy to erect, heavy duty, maintenance-free and have a lifespan of more than 30 years. You can convert the house from a greenhouse to a shade house with a simple change of covers, giving you effortless dual function.

aussieshadehouses.com.au





ON THE NOSE

Order bare-root roses now for winter planting. Choose from beautiful new releases for 2025 and over 600 varieties of bushes, climbers and standards that are perfect for any garden.

wagnersrosenursery.com.au



WINTER PALETTE

Winter roses (hellebores) are popular winter-flowering perennials, perfect in semi-shaded areas of gardens in temperate regions. Post Office Farm Nursery has an amazing range of flower colours and the expertise on hellebores to help you on your way.

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[PLANNING A TRIP TO THE SHOPS? HERE'S OUR ROUND-UP OF PRODUCTS]

YOUR SHOPPING DIRECTORY

Adairs adairs.com.au
Blinds Online blindsonline.com.au
Bunnings bunnings.com.au
Clark Rubber clarkrubber.com.au
Dulux dulux.com.au
Early Settler earlysettler.com.au
Etsy etsy.com/au/
French Knot frenchknot.com.au
IKEA ikea.com.au
Kinokuniya kinokuniya.com.au
Kmart kmart.com.au
Le Sac shoplesac.com
Miss Amara missamara.com.au
Myer myer.com.au
Olive et Oriel oliveetoriel.com
Porter's Paints porterspaints.com
Provincial Home Living provincialhomeliving.com.au
Spotlight spotlightstores.com
Target target.com.au
The Seed Collection theseedcollection.com.au

SPROUTING SAVINGS, PAGE 16

Shopping details

Amazon Seed envelopes, $9.99.
French Knot Gold handle scissors (medium), $34.95.
The Seed Collection Ornamental seed tin, $18.25.

PLANTS FOR FREE, PAGE 64

Shopping details

Amazon Homiliky hydroponic plant stand, $19. Seed envelopes, $9.99. Seed starter trays, $15.29. Kinglake natural jute twine, $9.99.
Blinds Online V&A William Morris Willow Steeple grey roller blind, from $101.
Bunnings Taskmaster 55mm black double robe hook, $3.20. Saxon hand cultivator, $4.50.
IKEA Bekvam spice rack, $5. Vattenkrasse watering can, $17. Honungspalm plant pot, $5. Muskotblomma terracotta plant pot, $10.
French Knot French scissors in black (medium), $12.95. Gold handle scissors (large), $39.95. Small Linford green floral taper plant pot, $16.95. Large Arden blue floral taper planter, $19.95. Small Arden blue floral taper planter, $16.95.
Le Sac Stainless steel weeding knife, $25.95. Tool belt, $79.95. Small seed dibber, $21.
Myer Maxwell & Williams Diamante rose bowl vase, $19.95.
Porter's Paints Gardenia wall paint 4L, $155.90.
The Seed Collection Ornamental seed tin, $18.25.

COMMUNITY CUBBY, PAGE 82

Shopping details

Bunnings Grass turf mat, 3m roll, $39.80.

Project supplies

Bunnings 1220 x 610mm 18mm plywood hardwood marine AA grade, $79.80. Dulux Low Sheen Weathershield Exterior Paint in Natural White and Deep South 1L, $49.05 each. Kinetic 6mm copper pipe saddle clips, $9.82 for 10 pack. 88 x 88mm 1.8m F7 H4 KD treated pine premium post, $49. 90 x 45mm outdoor framing H3 treated pine – 2.4m, $16.80.
Dulux Ice Pack Half Wash & Wear Low Sheen 4L, $98.90.
Spotlight Crafters Choice A4 acrylic sheet (clear), $4 for one piece.
Target Anko black shower caddy, $10.

MAGNIFICENT MOULDING, PAGE 108

Shopping details

Blinds Online V&A William Morris Strawberry Thief sheer eyelet curtain, from $92.
Early Settler Dinis side table, $149.
French Knot Blue Marrakesh cushion with insert, $79.95.
Kinokuniya Books, various prices.
Miss Amara Sonia floral pattern rug in beige and grey, from $199.
Olive et Oriel "Nostalgia II" framed art print, $119.95.
Provincial Home Living Khadi Hickory Stripe armchair, $1199. Marseille cup and saucer, $7.95.

Project supplies

Annandale Wallpapers Edwardian Panel paintable wallpaper, 10m roll, $85.
Bunnings Superfresco Easy 4.5kg Ready Mixed Paste, $34.70. Porta 31x15mm 2.4m panel mould in clear pine, $16.90. Selleys 420g Liquid Nails Fast Grab Strong Adhesive, $7.25. Selleys 475g No More Gaps Interior Multipurpose Gap Filler, $5.35. Dulux PRECISION White Maximum Strength Adhesion Primer 1L, $45.90. Dulux Vivid White Low Gloss Aquanamel Enamel Paint 1L, $64.50.

FROM BARREN TO BOUNTIFUL, PAGE 116

Project supplies

Bunnings 90 x 45mm outdoor framing H3 treated pine – 6.0m, $42. Hobson M12 x

Prices are approximate and a guide only.

3000mm hot dip galvanised threaded rod, $14.26. Dunnings 60 x 60 x 70 x 3mm black heavy-duty angle bracket plate, $4.62. Zenith 12G x 30mm galvanised Type 17 hex head timber screws, $10.60 for 50 pack. Bastion 20kg white brickies sand, $10.60. Australian Builders 20kg off white cement, $13.27.

Planter supplies

Bunnings Bastion 10mm blue metal, 20kg bag, $11.10. GRUNT 1 x 10m non woven geotextile membrane drain mat fabric, $43.77. Scotts Osmocote Plus Organics Tomato, Vegetable & Herb Premium Planting Mix, 50L, $19.92.

WADDLE THIS WAY, PAGE 144

Shopping details

Kinokuniya all books, various prices.
Kmart Pastel felt garland, $6.
Miss Amara Sonia floral pattern rug in beige and grey, from $199.

Project supplies

Bunnings Tuscan Path 4-6mm 2kg white mini pebbles, $7.98. 3M Scotchgard 297g Fabric and Upholstery Protector, $10.49.
Dulux Ice Pack Half Wash & Wear Low Sheen 4L, $98.90. Pale Sage Wash & Wear Low Sheen 4L, $98.90.
Spotlight Prima mini gingham printed flat fat blender fabric, 50 x 52 cm, $5. Micro spot blender fat flat, 50 x 52 cm, $5. Paisley blender cotton flat fat, 50 x 52cm, $5. Micro stripe blender cotton flat fat, 50 x 52 cm, $5. Sure-Bond 100cm medium interfacing fabric, $3.80 per metre. Hemline shirt buttons green 50g, $8. Excel Fibre Hobby Fill, 200g, $9.50.

VELVET, PAGE 148

MUSHROOMS

Project supplies

Spotlight Crafters Choice 12x12-inch mount board, $6.50. Prima Craft 85 GSM polyester wadding in white, 74cm wide, $9.50 per metre. (Velvet from op-shop finds.)

OTTOMAN

Project supplies

Bunnings 1200 x 810mm 3mm plywood pine premium BC grade, $18. Adoored vertical leg plate $2.50 for two.
Clark Rubber High density foam, $2.26 per 100x100mm square.
Spotlight Polyester wadding 150 GSM, $20. Warwick Worthington chair legs, $19 each, Galena velvet fabric in various colours, $25 per metre.

WALL FLOWERS

Project supplies

Spotlight Vivaldi Floral Accessories 12 gauge 5m aluminium wire silver, $5.50. Arbee galvanised metal ring silver, 50cm, $10. Mount board 12x12 inch, $6.50. Polyester wadding 150 GSM, $20. Galena velvet fabric in various colours, $25 per metre.

FIRST IMPRESSIONS

Project supplies

Etsy Rubber or wooden floral stamp sets in various designs and prices.
Spotlight Galena velvet fabric in various colours, $25 per metre. Everyday cushion insert, from $5 (36x36cm) to $13 (66x66cm).

THE FINE PRINT, PAGE 156

Shopping details

Adairs Emia linen cushion in mustard and white, 50x50cm, $69.99. Porcini table light, $119.99. Romeo rug in ivory, 160x230cm, $449.99. Maya white chair, $499.99. Muse table in natural, 40x60cm, $199.99.
Kmart Arched bedside table, $39. Scallop edge bowl, $7.

Project supplies

Bunnings Porta 18 x 6mm 2.4m Fly Bead (Half Round) Tasmanian oak, $11.90. GRUNT 75m cotton shop twine, $3.20.
Spotlight Speedball 8oz Fabric Ink, $20. Gel Press Mono Printing Plate Multicoloured 3 x 5 in, $24.80. X-Press it 4 inch Premium Brayer, $24.

PAWS AND RELAX, PAGE 172

Project supplies

Kmart Anko cotton rich cover pillows (medium profile), $12 (two pack).
Spotlight 112cm wide cotton drill fabric in plain colours, $7 per metre, and patterns, from $19 per metre. (Cotton canvas, 150cm wide, in plain, $25 per metre, and patterns, $30 per metre, is also suitable.) Simplicity 50mm wide webbing, $7 per metre.



better experiences

[UPCOMING FREE OR LOW-COST EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES WITH RACHEL IORFINO]



A night under the stars

DEC 2024 – JUNE 2025, VIC

Hoping to camp in the April holidays? Parks Victoria has announced that campsites in 131 national parks across the state will be completely free until June 30, 2025. Pack your swag and camp chair, and book in advance!



Walk on the wild side

APRIL 6-11, FRASER COAST, QLD

Keen to learn about wildlife? Fraser Coast is hosting a free 'Week of Walks' where you can follow a guided tour around nature reserves, wetlands and coastal foreshores.

Crack a crab

MARCH 15-16, MANDURAH, WA

One of WA's biggest free events is back for you to eat, eat and eat some more! Celebrating the region's iconic blue manna crab, the Mandurah Crab Fest is running for two days.



Sip away spare time

APRIL 23-27, BAROSSA, SA

The Barossa Vintage Festival celebrates everything to do with the Barossa region, especially its wine. It has more than 85 events, but be sure to book tickets ahead (even for the free events) to secure your spot.





Memory Bites with Matt Moran

MARCH 10 – APRIL 14, SBS

Spend your Monday nights reminiscing with the likes of Pia Miranda, Ross Noble and Christine Anu as Matt Moran takes them through their most defining food memories.

We've also got our eyes on

SUNSET SESSIONS
Live music, Cockatoo Island, NSW, until April 5

PARRTJIMA
A Festival in Light, Flynn, NT, April 4–13

PERTH COMEDY FESTIVAL
Comedy, Perth, April 21 – May 18

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